THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

A NEW TRANSLATION

VOLUME 24

THE FATHERS OF THE CHURCH

A NEW TRANSLATION

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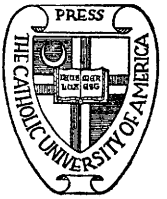
SAINT AUGUSTINE

THE CITY OF GOD

BOOKS XVII-XXII

Translated by
GERALD G. WALSH, S.J.
and
DANIEL J. HONAN



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OF

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VOLUME 8

SAINT AUGUSTINE

THE CITY OF GOD

BOOKS XVII-XXII

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BOOK SEVENTEEN

Chapter 1

WE HAVE SEEN the promises which God made to Abraham—to be the father, first, of the Jewish race according to the flesh, and, second, of all nations who were to embrace the faith. The development in history of the City of God will show how these promises were kept.

The end of the preceding Book brought us up to the reign of King David. I shall now begin with his reign, and treat of what ensued in as much detail as the theme of this Book requires. There is a period which begins with the prophecies of Samuel and continues through the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity (which Jeremias had foretold[1]) and ends with the rebuilding of the Temple, after the Israelites came home. This period is known as the 'Age of the Prophets,' although, of course, the patriarch Noe, in whose lifetime the whole earth was destroyed by the flood, and others before and after him up to the time of the kings, were Prophets also. At least, they prefigured, in some fashion, many things touching the City of God and the kingdom of heaven, and sometimes actually prophesied. Consequently, it is not too much to speak of these men as Prophets; some of them are explicitly so called in Holy Writ, for example, Abraham and Moses.[2]

1 Jer. 25.11.
2 Gen. 20.7; Deut. 34.10.

Nevertheless, the age of the chief and greatest of the Prophets begins with Samuel. He it was who, at God's bidding, anointed Saul as king and, when Saul had been cast off, David. The remaining kings were to come from David's stock for as long as their succession was ordained.

Now, if I were to dwell upon everything the Prophets foretold of Christ, while the City of God waxed in the birth and waned in the death of its members throughout this era, I would never have done. The reason for this is that even when the Scriptures truly seem to be annals of one king after another, with the exploits and fortunes of each set down with a chronicler's care, it will be found, provided the Holy Spirit teaches us to read the Scriptures rightly, that they seem even more—assuredly not less—concerned with prophecy than with history. And anyone who has given this problem even a passing thought will realize how many weighty and wearisome tomes it would take to delve into these matters and air them fully. Even in regard to the texts which are unquestionably prophetic of Christ and His kingdom, the City of God, there are so many that a thoroughgoing examination would carry me beyond the modest limits of this work. And so as far as I am able, I shall so govern my pen that, God willing, I may get through this Book, neither leaving out what should be said nor lingering on what is superfluous.

Chapter 2

I have already related[1] how, out of all the promises God made from the beginning, two were made to Abraham. One was that his seed should own the land of Chanaan, for such is the sense of the words: 'Come into the land which I shall

1 Cf. above, 16.16.

show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation.'[2] The other, which is vastly more important than the first, was that, whereas in his fleshly seed he was to sire the Jewish race alone, in his spiritual seed he was to be the father of every people that would follow in the footsteps of his faith. This promise opens with the words: 'In you shall the nations of the earth be blessed.'[3] I also went on to prove, by means of a great many additional texts, that both these pledges were really given.

At the time of which I was speaking, the people of Israel, the carnal seed of Abraham, were not merely dwelling in the promised land, in possession of their foes' cities, but were reigning under their own kings. Already, then, God's promises with respect to them had been in large measure fulfilled, not alone the promises that had been made to the ancient fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in their day, but others as well which God had given them through Moses, by whose hand He brought them out of the bondage of Egypt and through the desert, and by whose lips He made known all the past history of the race.

Nevertheless, even after the illustrious captain, Josue son of Nun, had conducted them into the promised land, crushed the Gentiles, parceled out the territory among the twelve tribes according to divine command, and then died, God's pledge that Chanaan should reach from a certain river of Egypt to the great Euphrates[4] had not been fulfilled to the letter. Neither, after Josue, was this pledge redeemed in the time of the Judges. Yet it was looked upon not as a matter for further prophecy, but for imminent realization.[5] It was, in

2 Gen. 12.1. Texts cited follow the Confraternity translation except when St. Augustine's original Latin varies considerably from the Latin Vulgate.
3 Gen. 12.3.
4 Gen. 15.18.
5 . . . *nec adhuc prophetabatur futurum, sed expectabatur implendum.*

fact, realized in David and in his son Solomon. For, when they had put down and made tributary all the peoples round about, Solomon's sway was enlarged to the precise terms of the promise. At this point, the seed of Abraham under its kings was in Chanaan, the earthly land of promise, established in such wise that nothing remained to implement fully God's temporal pledge except that the Hebrews and their descendants should there abide, rooted in unshakeable worldly well-being until the end of time. The condition was that they obey the laws of the Lord their God.

But, since God knew that they would not obey, He made use of temporal chastisements to test the handful of loyal believers He had among them, and to render alert those followers He was to have later on among all those peoples for whose sake He was planning to make good His second promise, in the revelation of His New Testament, in the Incarnation of Christ.

Chapter 3

The divine revelations made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all other signs and prophecies contained in the early Scriptures, are sometimes related to the carnal progeny of Abraham and, at other times, to that spiritual progeny which means all nations that are blessed and called to eternal life in the kingdom of heaven as co-heirs of Christ in the New Testament. This is true, also, of the prophecies belonging to the 'Age of the Kings.' Some of them refer to the terrestrial Jerusalem, the slave-girl, bearing her sons into bondage to serve beside her; others, to the free City of God, the true everlasting Jerusalem above, whose sons are men living by God's law like pilgrims on earth. Yet, there are still others among them which are applicable to both cities at

one and the same time, to the slave-girl literally, and figuratively to the free woman.[1]

Thus, the Prophets' sayings are of three classes: one class refers to the earthly, a second to the heavenly Jerusalem, and a third to both simultaneously. It will be best to support this assertion with illustrations. The Prophet Nathan was sent to accuse King David of a grave sin and to foretell what evils were to befall him on this account.[2] Now no one can fail to see that this prophecy refers to the earthly city. There are others like it, sometimes addressed to the people at large for their profit and well-being, and sometimes to an individual who merited a word from God to foreknow some event for the guidance of his temporal life.

In the following prophecy, however, the reference is to the heavenly Jerusalem: 'Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Juda; not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; the covenant which they made void, and I had dominion over them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord, I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart; and I will be their God and they shall be my people.'[3] Here, God Himself is Jerusalem's reward. Her highest—her entire—good is to possess Him and to be possessed by Him.

Both cities are meant when Jerusalem is called the City of God and when it is foretold that the house of God is one day to be there—a prophecy that seems to be fulfilled in the magnificent Temple built by King Solomon—for such things

1 Cf. Gal. 4.21-31; and above, 15.2, for St. Augustine's discussion of this passage.
2 2 Kings 12.
3 Jer. 31.31-33.

both happened historically in the earthly Jerusalem and also forefigured the heavenly Jerusalem.

This kind of prophecy, blending the other two kinds, is very common in the ancient canonical books devoted to history. It has challenged and continues to challenge the interpretative talent of Scripture students. They must search for the allegorical sense to be fulfilled, for example, in the seed of Abraham according to the faith, when they read of something foretold and accomplished in the literal sense with respect to his seed according to the flesh. Some, indeed, have gone so far as to claim that in these books there are no predictions and fulfillments—not even facts which were not predicted—which do not suggest some necessary figurative reference to the City of God and her pilgrim children in this life.

But, if this is so, the sayings of the Prophets are of two, not of three, classes. Moreover, this classification would apply to the whole Old Testament as well. For, if everything foretold there of the earthly Jerusalem or accomplished in her must forthwith be looked upon as a foreshadowing of the heavenly, then there is nothing there pertaining to the former alone. Consequently, only two types of prophecy would be admitted: one having to do with the free City, the other with the free and bond together.

Now, just as I feel that those are greatly mistaken who think that the historical facts in those books have no significance other than that things occurred as described, so I find too venturesome those who maintain that absolutely everything is bound up with allegorical meanings.[4] That is why I called for three classes of prophecies, not for two.

This is my opinion. However, I do not censure those who may have been able to carve out some spiritual interpretation from every historical fact recounted, so long as they

4 Cf. above, 16.2.

take good care first and foremost to adhere to the historical fact.[5] Certainly, passages of such nature that they seem to fit in with neither man's nor God's actions and plans will seem to a believer to be valueless in themselves. He will want to interpret such matters in a spiritual sense, if he can, or at least he will admit that they should be so interpreted by some one else who knows how.

Chapter 4

Coming to the period of the kings, we find that Saul was ousted and that David became the first king to found a long dynasty in the earthly Jerusalem. Here, in the onward course of the City of God, was an event not to be passed over in silence, for it prefigured and heralded a tremendous change that was to come in respect to the two Testaments. I mean that the priesthood and kingship of the Old were transformed into the priesthood and everlasting kingship of Jesus Christ in the New. As a matter of fact, two occurrences—Samuel's supplanting of the rejected priest, Heli, to become both priest and judge, and David's establishment on the throne (after Saul had been cast aside)—foreshadowed this transformation.

Surely, too, this change was prophesied by Samuel's own mother, Anna—barren in early life, but later on happily fruitful—when she sang her ecstatic thanksgiving, and faithfully, as she had promised, consecrated her weaned son to God. She said: 'My heart is strengthened in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in my God; my mouth is enlarged over my enemies; because I have joyed in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord is; for there is none holy beside thee, and there is none just like our God. Do not multiply to speak lofty things,

5 Cf. above, 13.21, 14.11.

boasting; let old matters depart from your mouth; for the Lord is a God of all knowledge, and a God making ready his plans. The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength. They that were full of bread before have been rendered lesser; and the hungry have gone beyond the earth, so that the barren hath borne seven; and she that had many children is weakened. The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to hell and bringeth back again. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he humbleth and he exalteth. He raiseth up the poor man from the earth, and lifteth up the needy man from the dunghill; that he may sit with princes, and hold the throne of glory. He giveth the vow to him that voweth, and he hath blessed the years of the just man, because no man shall prevail by his own strength. The Lord shall make weak his enemy, the Lord who is holy. Let not the prudent glory in his prudence, nor the mighty in his might, nor the rich in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this: to understand and know the Lord, and to practice justice and judgment in the midst of the earth. The Lord hath gone up into the heavens and hath thundered; he shall judge the ends of the earth, because he is just. He giveth power to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of his Christ.'[1]

Will anyone, now, entertain the idea that these words are but the words of a solitary, simple-hearted little woman, saying 'Thank you' for her new-born baby? Is it possible for any man's mind to be so turned from truth's light as not to feel by how much this woman's words outstrip a woman's way of speech?[2] I think not. Anyone, at least, who is as impressed as he ought to be with the fact of her prophecy's accomplishment, already underway even now in this time of earthly pilgrimage, will pause, ponder, and plainly avow

1 1 Kings 2.1-10.
2 . . . *supergredi modum feminae huius.*

that this woman—whose very name, Anna, means 'His grace' —spoke in the role of the Christian religion, the City of God whose king and founder is Christ; further, that she spoke in the role of God's grace, that grace from which the proud are cut off and fall down and with which the lowly are filled in order to rise up. For, such is the leading melody of her hymn.

For all this, someone may say that she was not prophesying at all, but only giving God rapturous praise because she obtained the son she had sought in prayer. But, in this supposition, what can be the sense of the following words: 'The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength. They that were full of bread before have been rendered lesser; and the hungry have gone beyond the earth, so that the barren hath borne seven; and she that had many children is weakened'? Can it be that this barren woman actually had borne seven—for all her sterility? Assuredly not. The truth is that she had but one son when she spoke these words. Nor did she give birth to seven later on—nor even to six, with Samuel making the seventh. In fact, she bore three boys and two girls.

Another point. If, at the time of her speech, kings were yet to come in Israel, how shall we explain its conclusion: 'He giveth power to our kings, and shall exalt the horn of his Christ'? Where did she get this idea if she was not a prophetess?

Let Christ's Church, then, the City of the great King, full of grace, abounding in offspring, say that she has come to know in effect what was foretold of her so long ago by the lips of this holy mother: 'My heart is strengthened in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in my God.' Truly, her heart is strengthened and her horn is exalted, because she trusts not in herself but in her Lord and God.

'My mouth is enlarged over my enemies.' For, even in the

press of trials and tribulations, the 'word of God is not bound'—not even when His ambassadors are in chains.[3]

'I have joyed in thy salvation,' says Anna, meaning in that Jesus Christ, whom old Simeon, as the Gospel tells us, took when so tiny a one into his arms and hailed as one so great and said: 'Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace. Because my eyes have seen thy salvation.'[4] Let the Church sing, then: 'I have joyed in thy salvation. For there is none holy as the Lord is, and there is none just like our God.' Holy, indeed, and rendering holy; just and rendering just. 'There is none holy beside thee,' because none is made holy apart from thee.

Then Anna goes on to say: 'Do not multiply to speak lofty things, boasting; let old matters depart from your mouth. For the Lord is a God of all knowledge.' He knows you, that is, and knows you interiorly, too, where nobody else knows you. Indeed, 'If anyone thinks himself to be something, whereas he is nothing, he deceives himself.'[5] These words are addressed to the foes of the City of God, those on the side of Babylon, confident in their own strength, glorying in themselves and not in the Lord. Among these we must number, too, those Israelites who are carnal, earth-born and earth-bound citizens of the earthly Jerusalem—the very ones who, as St. Paul says, being 'ignorant of the Justice of God,' that is, the justice which God, who alone is just and rendering just, gives to a man, 'and seeking to establish their own,' a justice engendered from themselves rather than bestowed by God, 'have not submitted to the justice of God.'[6] Because, of course, they are proud and fondly imagine that they can please God without His help who is a God of all knowledge and the judge of consciences wherein He sees the thought of men. How insub-

3 Cf. 2 Tim. 2.9; Eph. 6.20.
4 Luke 2.29,30.
5 Gal. 6.3.
6 Rom. 10.3.

stantial they are if they are man's alone and uninspired by Him.

'A God making ready His plans.' What plans, indeed, save the fall of these proud folk and the uplifting of the humble of hearts? These are the plans, to be sure, which He set in motion, saying: 'The bow of the mighty is overcome, and the weak are girt with strength.' The 'bow of the mighty' means the calculated aim[7] of those who think themselves so mighty that they are humanly adequate without God's gift of aid to keep the commandments. Meanwhile, those men are girt with strength whose secret supplication sings: 'Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak.'[8]

Anna continues: 'They that were full of bread before have been rendered lesser; and the hungry have gone beyond the earth.' How shall we interpret the first clause save with reference to the Israelites, the great ones of the earth, so to speak, to whom was entrusted the work of God? It should be noted that in Hebrew society the children of a slave-girl were ranked as lesser (*minorati sunt*—not a very pure Latin expression, but admirably apt to express the idea in our text, namely, that the Israelites have been demoted from being greater to being lesser). And here is the reason: Because in the 'bread,' that is, in the divine communications which they alone among all races received, they savored only the things of earth. The Gentiles, on the other hand, to whom the Law was not given, once they came upon God's word in the New Testament, hungered for it greatly and, going beyond the earth, found in it the taste of heavenly as opposed to worldly things.

Next, as if to explore the reason for this reversal, Anna says: 'The barren one hath borne seven; and she that had many children is weakened.' In this passage, the sense of the

7 *Infirmatus est arcus, id est, intentio eorum . . .*
8 Ps. 6.3.

entire prophecy becomes clear to those who are familiar with the number seven as symbolizing the fullness of the Church. It was with this same symbol in view that St. John wrote to the 'seven' Churches, meaning that he was addressing the totality of the one Church. In the Proverbs of Solomon, too, Wisdom, an ancient foretype of the Church, is said to have 'built herself a house, she hath hewn her out seven pillars.'[9] Barren, to be sure, was the City of God among the Gentiles prior to the birth of this offspring which we see before us. We see, as well, that the earthly Jerusalem which had many children is become infirm. Her only strength, anyway, lay in the children of the free Jesuralem who dwelt in her midst. Now, however, that she lives by the letter alone—and not by the spirit—she is stripped of strength and laid low.

'The Lord killeth and maketh alive.' He has put to death her who had many children, and has given life to the barren one to bear seven. There is, however, a more appropriate interpretation of this verse, namely, that God brings to life the very men whom He puts to death. In fact, this is the note struck again in the words that follow: 'He bringeth down to hell and bringeth back again.' So, too, St. Paul says: 'If you are dead with Christ, seek those things that are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God.' Those to whom he addresses these words are, to be sure, brought down to death by the Lord—but for their soul's salvation. The Apostle adds: 'Mind the things that are above, not those that are on earth.' Plainly, these are those who 'hungering have gone beyond the earth.' 'You are dead,' St. Paul continues, 'and your life is hidden with Christ in God.'[10] This is God's way of bringing to life again the men whom He has put to death for their salvation!

But, has God brought these people 'down to hell' and

9 Prov. 9.1.
10 Col. 3.1-3.

brought them 'back again'? The faithful, at least, agree that this text is more fully realized in Him who is our Head than in us who are His members, in Him with whom, as the Apostle said, our life is hidden in God. For, God who has not spared even His own Son, but has delivered Him for us all,[11] both put Him to death and made Him alive again in His resurrection. And because we hear Christ's voice in the prophecy, 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,'[12] we know that God brought Him down thither and brought Him back again. It was by this poverty that we have 'become rich.'[13] For, 'The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich.' To grasp the sense of this text, let us hear what comes next: 'He humbleth and he exalteth.' He humbleth, that is, the proud and exalteth the humble. We read elsewhere, too: 'God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.'[14] This, indeed, is the theme of the entire speech of Anna whose name means 'His grace.'

Take, now, the words next in order :'He raiseth up the poor man from the earth.' How can I interpret these words better than by applying them to Him who, 'being rich, became poor for our sakes that by His poverty,' as I have just said, 'we might become rich.' God, indeed, raised Him up from the earth—but so speedily that His flesh never knew corruption. The next words, as well, I apply to Him: He 'lifteth up the needy man from the dunghill.' The poor man in the foregoing clause is identical with the needy man in this clause. Surely, we are not wrong in taking the 'dunghill,' whence He was lifted up, as standing for the Jews who persecuted Him, among whom St. Paul counted himself, so long as he persecuted Christ's Church. He says: 'But the things that were gain to me, these, for the sake of Christ,

11 Rom. 8.32.
12 Ps. 15.10.
13 Cf. 2 Cor. 8.9.
14 James 4.6.

I have counted loss. . . . For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as dung that I may gain Christ.'[15]

Christ, then, the poor man, was raised up from the earth above all the rich; destitute, He was lifted up from the dunghill above all the affluent, to sit with the princes of the people—those very princes to whom He said: 'You shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' This was in reply to their words: 'Behold, we have left all and followed thee.'[16] They had vowed this dedication of self with might and main. But, where did they get the determination so to commit themselves, save from Him alone of whom our text goes on to say: 'He giveth the vow to him that voweth'? Had it been otherwise, they would have been numbered among those mighty ones whose vow has been weakened. 'He giveth the vow to him that voweth.' Indeed, a man can rightly make no vow to the Lord unless he receive from Him the grace so to vow.

Anna continues: 'He hath blessed the years of the just man'—that he may live everlastingly, that is, in the company of Him to whom it was said: 'Thy years shall not fail.'[17] In eternity, to be sure, the years stand still; here on earth they pass by and passing perish. Before they come, they do not exist and, as soon as they come, they cease to exist, for their coming contains their conclusion.[18]

Take, now, those two clauses: 'He giveth the vow to him that voweth' and 'He hath blessed the years of the just man.' The former we undertake; the latter we receive—in this way, however, that God does not bestow the latter unless He helps us to accomplish the former. 'Because no man shall

15 Phil. 3.7,8.
16 Matt. 19.27,28.
17 Ps. 101.28.
18 . . . *immo pereunt; antequam veniant enim, non sunt; cum autem venerint, non erunt, quia cum suo fine veniunt.*

prevail by his own strength. The Lord shall make weak his enemy'—him, that is, who hates and stands in the way of the man who vows, and tries to prevent him from carrying out his vow. The Greek text, however, is ambiguous and may mean 'God's enemy.' Of course, as soon as we become the Lord's property, our enemy automatically becomes His enemy, too—an enemy to be vanquished by us, but not in virtue of our own streugth, 'because no man shall prevail by his own strength.' In either reading, 'The Lord shall make weak his enemy,' the Lord who is holy, so that the enemy will be weak enough for the saints (made holy by the Lord of saints) to overcome.

Because this is true, 'let not the prudent glory in his prudence, nor the mighty in his might, nor the rich in his riches; but let him who glorieth glory in this: to understand and know the Lord, and to practice justice and judgment in the midst of the earth.' A man has no small understanding and knowledge of the Lord if he knows that his understanding and knowledge of the Lord derive from the Lord. St. Paul says: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received it, why dost thou boast as if thou hadst not received it?'[19]—as if, that is, you were yourself the source of that in which you glory. 'To practice justice and judgment' means to live virtuously, and to live virtuously means to obey God's law. Now, the purpose of God's law, the final point of reference for every precept, 'is charity from a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned.'[20] And, as St. John says, such 'charity is from God.'[21] Therefore, it is from God that a man is empowered to practice justice and judgment.

Meanwhile, what about the phrase 'in the midst of the

19 1 Cor. 4.7.
20 1 Tim. 1.5.
21 1 John 4.7.

earth'? No one will be so silly as to say that men who happen to live at the ends of the earth are not bound to practice justice and judgment, too. Why, then, is the little phrase tagged on? Actually, if the command were simply, without further specification, to practice justice and judgment, it would more obviously apply to all men, without respect to geographical situation, inlanders and sea-coast folk alike.[22] This is what makes me think that the expression, 'in the midst of the earth,' is equivalent to 'so long as a man lives in his body'—to forestall anyone's cherishing the idea that, this corporeal life over, a man may still have time to practice the justice and judgment he failed to practice in the flesh, and thus slip by God's retribution. For, in this mortal life everyone carries his own 'earth' about with him. When he dies, our common earth takes this 'earth' back again—to be restored to him, of course, on the day of resurrection. 'In the midst of the earth,' therefore, means that while our souls are yet shut in by this earthly body we must practice such justice and judgment as will profit us later on—on that day, in fact, when 'each one may receive what he has won through the body, according to his works, whether good or evil.'[23] St. Paul wrote 'through the body' to represent the duration of a man's life in his body. For, if a man blasphemes through godless thinking and spiritual perversity alone, without the concurrence of any of his bodily parts, he will not, for this reason, be free from guilt. Even if no limb of his body told the tale, he committed the sin while he inhabited his body.

This interpretation of the phrase, 'in the midst of the earth,' applies also to a passage in the psalms: 'God is our king before ages; he hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.'[24] This means that God our king, in the sense of the Lord Jesus who was 'before ages,' because through Him

22 . . . *et mediterraneos et maritimos.*
23 2 Cor. 5.10.
24 Ps. 73.12.

the ages were made, wrought salvation 'in the midst of the earth,' that is to say, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt in His earthly body.

To return to Anna's prophecy. Having set forth how he who glories ought to glory (in the Lord, of course, and not in himself), she turns to that settling of accounts which will take place on Judgment Day. 'The Lord hath gone up into the heavens and hath thundered. He shall judge the ends of the earth, because he is just.' She keeps, by the way, the exact order which the faithful follow in the Creed: Christ our Lord ascended into heaven, and thence shall come to judge the living and the dead. Hear what St. Paul says: 'Now this, "he ascended," what does it mean but that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended, he it is who ascended also above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.'[25] The Apostles were the clouds through which He thundered, and the same that He filled with the Holy Spirit after His ascension. These were the clouds, too, which He solemnly forebade, in Isaias, to rain upon the slave-girl Jerusalem, His thankless vineyard.[26]

'He shall judge the ends of the earth.' This is equivalent to saying, 'even the ends of the earth,' for we are not to think that He will not judge the rest of the earth as well. Beyond question, He shall judge all men, none excepted. Still, it is better to understand 'the ends of the earth' as 'the ends of a man,' the last moments of his life, for Christ will judge men, not according to the way they change for better or worse in the middle of this mortal life, but according to their final disposition. Hence the verse: 'He who has persevered to the end will be saved.'[27] A man, therefore, who perseveres in practicing 'justice and judgment' in the 'midst' of his

25 Eph. 4.9,10.
26 Isa. 5.6.
27 Matt. 10.22.

earth, shall not be condemned when the 'ends' of his earth are brought to judgment.

'He giveth power to our kings'—that is, such power that, when He judges them, He will not need to condemn them. He gives them the power both to master their flesh like kings and to conquer the world through Him who shed His blood for their sake.

'And he shall exalt the horn of his Christ.' How shall Christ exalt the horn of His Christ? Just above, the verse, 'The Lord hath gone up into the heavens,' had Christ our Lord for its subject. And now we are told that the same 'shall exalt the horn of his Christ.' Who can be this Christ of Christ? We know. This verse means that He shall lift up the horn of each and every one of His followers, in accordance with what Anna herself said at the outset of this hymn: 'My horn is exalted in my God.' Assuredly, we are not wrong in speaking of those anointed with His chrism as 'Christs,' understanding, of course, that the entire Body with its Head makes one Christ.

Such is the prophecy of Anna, mother of Samuel, a holy and richly praised man in whom was then forefigured the transformation, today realized, of the ancient priesthood, since she who had many sons is weakened, so that the barren woman who has borne seven might have a new priesthood in Christ.

Chapter 5

This change was even more plainly predicted by the man of God who was sent to the priest Heli. The man's name is unknown, but we must unhesitatingly take him for a Prophet in view of the function he performed. Here is the text: 'And there came a man of God to Heli, and said to him: Thus saith the Lord: Did I not plainly appear to thy father's

house, when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharao? And I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, and burn incense to me, and to wear the ephod before me: and I gave to thy father's house of all the sacrifices of the children of Israel. Why have you kicked away my victims, and my gifts which I commanded to be offered in the temple: and thou hast rather honored thy sons than me, to eat the first fruits of every sacrifice of my people Israel? Wherefore thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, shall walk before me forever. But now saith the Lord: Far be this from me; but whosever shall glorify me, him will I glorify; but they that despise me shall be despised. Behold the days come; and I will cut off thy seed, and the seed of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man of you in my house forever, and I will cut off every man of you from my altar that his eyes may faint and his soul be spent. And every survivor of thy house shall fall before the sword of warriors. And this shall be a sign to thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, Ophni and Phinees. In one day they shall both of them die. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to my heart, and my soul, and I will build him a faithful house, and he shall walk all days before my Christ. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall remain in thy house shall come to adore him with a piece of silver, saying: Put me, I beseech thee, to somewhat of thy priestly office, that I may eat a morsel of bread.'[1]

There is no room for saying that this wholly unmistakable prophecy of a transformation in the ancient priesthood was fulfilled in Samuel, for later on there were other priests from the stock of Aaron—Sadoc and Abiathar during David's day, for example—and still others afterwards, prior to the time when the long-foretold shifting of the priesthood was destined

1 Cf. 1 Kings 2.27-36.

for actual realization in Christ. (Samuel, it is true, was not a son of Aaron, whose progeny alone had been commissioned to produce priests, although he was of the same tribe which had been established to serve at the altar. This incident, too, was a foreshadowing of the change to be effected in Jesus Christ—an incident that refers literally to the Old Testament and symbolically to the New. We may call it a deed-prophecy, signifying, that is, by its accomplishment in fact what the Prophet told the priest Heli in so many words.)

But, today, who can examine this prophecy with eyes of faith and fail to see its fulfillment? The Jews, commanded by divine law to supply themselves with priests from Aaron's seed, have now no tabernacle, no temple, no altar, no sacrifice, nor, consequently, any priest left. This is a condition the Prophet depicted when he said: 'Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me forever. But now saith the Lord: Far be this from me; but whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify; but they that despise me shall be despised.' The earlier part of this passage proves that, in speaking of the house of Heli's father, he was not speaking of Heli's own father, but of Aaron, the first appointed priest, from whose line succeeding priests were to come. Here are the words: 'Did I not plainly appear to thy father's house, when they were in Egypt in the house of Pharao? And I chose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest.' Now, the only one of Heli's ancestors who was in the Egyptian captivity and, upon its close, was chosen priest was Aaron. In our text, then, it is Aaron's stock which the Prophet said would, in time, produce no more priests. Today, we see this prediction fulfilled.

Let faith be on the alert; the reality is right before us to be seen and grasped. It is even forcibly borne in on those who refuse to see it. He says: 'Behold the days come: and

I will cut off thy seed, and the seed of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man of you in my house forever, and I will cut off every man of you from my altar, that his eyes may faint and his soul be spent.' Now, that predicted day has already come. There is no living priest of Aaron's order. Meanwhile, any one of his survivors who is a man of heart, seeing that the great honor of the priesthood has been withdrawn from him while the world-wide sacrifice of Christians prevails, must weep and pine away in grief of soul.

The following text, on the other hand, applies literally to the house of Heli, to whom these words were addressed: 'And every survivor of thy house shall fall before the sword of warriors. And this shall be a sign to thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, Ophni and Phinees: in one day they shall both of them die.' This sign betokened the transfer of the priesthood from Heli's house; the transfer of the priesthood from Heli's house betokened, more broadly, the transfer of the priesthood from Aaron's house. In a word, the death of Heli's two sons meant more than the death of two men; it meant the death of Aaron's priesthood.

The next passage touches directly that priest whom Samuel, succeeding Heli, typified—I mean Jesus Christ, the true priest of the New Testament. 'And I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to my heart, and my soul, and I will build him a faithful house'—namely, the heavenly and everlasting Jerusalem. 'And it shall walk all days before my Christ.' 'It shall walk' means 'it shall keep company with,' as in the earlier passage where he said of Aaron's house: 'I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever.' The subject of the clause, 'shall walk before my Christ,' is, of course, the house itself—not the priest Christ, Mediator and Saviour. In this sense, then, His house shall walk before Him—at least, this is a possible interpretation—that it shall pass with Him from death to

life, 'forever,' that is, so long as there are men to die, until the end of the world.

With respect to God's words, 'a faithful priest who shall do according to my heart, and my soul,' let us not entertain the idea that He, the Creator of the human soul, Himself has a soul. This is a figurative, not a literal, expression, similar to those other texts in which God is said to have hands and feet and other bodily parts. Indeed, to prevent anyone thinking that man's imaging of God has anything to do with corporeal likeness, Scripture speaks with reference to God of corporeal parts which man does not have, for example, wings—as in the passage: 'Protect me under the shadow of thy wings.'[2] Thus, we are given to understand that all such words are applied to God's ineffable nature only by metaphor.

The next verse, 'And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall remain in thy house, shall come to adore him,' applies not to Heli's family, but to Aaron's, which produced offspring up to Christ's coming and, in fact, up to our own day. For, an earlier verse had said of Heli's family: 'And every survivor of thy house shall fall before the sword of warriors.' If it is true, then, that no one of Heli's children escaped the avenging sword, how are we to understand the former verse save as applying to Heli's stock considered as having the amplitude of Aaron's whole priesthood? It seems likely that the words, 'whoever shall remain in thy house,' allude to that predestined remnant of which another Prophet said: 'The remnant shall be saved,'[3] and of which the Apostle said: 'Even so, then, at the present time there is a remnant left, selected out of grace.'[4] If that is so, then the remnant means the Jews who have believed in Christ. Many of them, we remember, did believe in the days of the Apostles, and even today there are

2 Ps. 16.8.
3 Isa. 10.22.
4 Rom. 11.5.

some converts, although very few. Surely, in these believing Jews there are realized the immediately following words of this man of God: 'He shall come to adore him with a piece of silver.' To adore whom? Surely, to adore that High Priest who is God. In the priesthood according to Aaron, men did not approach the temple or altar of God to adore the priest. What, moreover, does the phrase, 'with a piece of silver' mean if not the short word of faith to which the Apostle refers in the text: 'Because a speedy word will the Lord accomplish on earth'?[5] That silver stands for speech we have evidence in one of the psalms: 'The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried by the fire.'[6]

What does he have to say, this believer, who comes to adore God's priest who is God and Priest? 'Put me, I beseech thee, to somewhat of thy priestly office, that I may eat a morsel of bread'—I do not wish, that is, to be established in the dignity of my forebears, for there is no such dignity; but let me have some share in thy priestly office. 'I have chosen to be an abject in the house of my God'[7] means I desire to be a member, however nondescript and unimportant, of your priesthood. In this text, of course, the priesthood means the people itself, whose Priest is the 'Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ.'[8] This is the people to whom the Apostle Peter addresses the words: 'A holy nation, a royal priesthood.'[9] Some, it is true, have read 'thy sacrifice' for 'thy priesthood.' Even so, the phrase would still indicate Christ's people, in harmony with the words of St. Paul: 'Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body.'[10]

The Prophet's concluding clause, 'that I may eat a morsel of bread,' succinctly depicts the very species of the sacrifice

5 Rom. 9.28.
6 Ps. 11.7.
7 Ps. 83.11.
8 Cf. 1 Tim. 2.5.
9 1 Pet. 2.9.
10 1 Cor. 10.17.

in question, the same of which the Priest Himself said: 'The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.'[11] It is this sacrifice and no other. Let the reader understand, then, the sacrifice according to the order of Melchisedech, not any sacrifice according to the order of Aaron.

Therefore, this short and simple and soul-saving expression of faith, 'Put me, I beseech thee, to somewhat of thy priestly office, that I may eat a morsel of bread,' is itself the 'piece of silver,' because it is brief and is the word of the Lord Himself dwelling in the believer's heart. Earlier in the text He had said that He had given the house of Aaron food from the Old Testament victims: 'I gave to thy father's house for food of all the fiery sacrifices of the children of Israel'—that is, of the Jewish sacrifices. Accordingly, at this point, He said: 'That I may eat a morsel of bread,' for this is the sacrifice of Christians in the New Testament.

Chapter 6

Despite the fact that these developments, so obscurely foretold, are now realized so clearly, a man may not unreasonably ask: 'How can I be sure that everything foretold in Scripture will actually happen, if the divine promise, "Thy house and the house of thy father shall walk before me for ever," remained unfulfilled?' The ancient priesthood has been, in fact, transformed. There is no hope that the pledges made to Aaron's family are ever to be redeemed. Is it not the priesthood which supplanted the one rejected and transformed that is extolled as everlasting? Now, anyone who raises this difficulty shows that he does not grasp, or has forgotten, that the priesthood of Aaron was established solely as a foreshadowing of an eternal priesthood. Consequently, when

11 John 6.51.

everlastingness was promised it, it was promised, not to the symbolizing shadow, but to the solid substance for which the symbol and shadow stood, and it was precisely lest anyone should imagine that the symbol itself was to endure that its transformation, also, needed and received prediction.

In the same way, Saul's kingdom foreshadowed one that should last forever, though he personally was reprobated and rejected. The very oil with which he was anointed (the chrism by token of which he was called a 'Christ') must be understood symbolically as pointing to a profound mystery. David himself so religiously respected this anointed state that he was conscience-stricken when, in a dark cave where Saul had entered to ease himself, David came up, unspied, from behind and cut off a tiny piece of Saul's robe. David did this merely to have evidence later how he had spared Saul when he could have killed him, thus hoping to disabuse Saul of the idea which drove him implacably to pursue David as his foe. Nevertheless, David quaked with fear that perhaps merely by so touching Saul's garments he was guilty of sacrilege. Here is the text: 'After which David's heart struck him, because he had cut off the hem of Saul's robe.' And he said to his men (who were urging him to kill Saul when he thus had him at his mercy): 'The Lord be merciful unto me, that I may do not such thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, as to lay my hand upon him, because he is the Lord's anointed.'[1] Such deep religious reverence was paid to this foreshadowing figure, not for what it was in itself, but precisely because of the reality it typified.

In the same vein, take the words Samuel said to Saul: 'Thou hast done foolishly, and hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee. And if thou hadst not done this, the Lord would now have established thy kingdom over Israel forever. But thy kingdom

1 1 Kings 24.6,7.

shall not continue for thee. The Lord hath sought him a man according to his own heart: and him hath the Lord commanded to be prince over his people, because thou hast not observed that which the Lord commanded.'[2] These words are not to be taken to mean that God had intended for Saul himself to reign forever, and subsequently had decided otherwise on account of Saul's sins (for God knew Saul was going to sin). They mean merely that God had planned for him to have such a kingdom as would typify an everlasting kingdom. Hence the added precision: 'But thy kingdom shall not continue for thee.'

The Kingdom which Saul's kingdom symbolized has continued and will continue—but not for Saul; for neither was he personally destined to rule forever, nor was even his progeny after him (at least in the sense of his blood successors following one after another) to make good the pledge, 'forever.'

Samuel continues: 'And the Lord hath sought him a man.' This means either David or the Mediator of the New Testament who was forefigured by the chrism with which David and his progeny were anointed. When Scripture, by the way, says that God 'seeks' for himself a man, we are not to suppose that God does not know the whereabouts of the man in question. He is merely speaking through a man after the manner of men because He is seeking us men.[3] But, of course, we were so perfectly known to God the Father, and to His only-begotten Son as well, who 'came to seek what was lost,'[4] that 'he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.'[5] The words, 'He shall seek for himself,' mean 'He shall have for his

2 1 Kings 13.13,14.
3 Cf. above, 15.25.
4 Luke 19.10.
5 Eph. 1.4.

own.' (In Latin, when *quaerere,* 'to seek,' takes a prefix, it becomes *adquirere,* 'to acquire.' Thus, the meaning is clear enough. Even without the prefix, *quaerere* can mean 'to acquire.' That is why profits or gains are known as *quaestus.*)

Chapter 7

Again Saul sinned by disobedience, and again Samuel addressed to him the Lord's word: 'Forasmuch, therefore, as thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord hath also rejected thee being king.' And again, because of the same sin, when Saul admitted it and sought pardon, beseeching Samuel to go back with him and appease God, the Prophet said: 'I will not return with thee, because thou has rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. And Samuel turned about to go away; but he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent. And Samuel said to him: The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel from thy hand this day, and hath given it to thy neighbor who is good above thee, and Israel shall be divided in two. But the triumpher in Israel will not spare, and will not be moved to repentance; for he is not a man that he should repent. He threatens and does not persist.'[1]

Actually, the man to whom these words were spoken, 'The Lord shall reject thee from being king over Israel,' and, 'The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day,' ruled over Israel for forty years—for the same duration as David did—and he heard this pronouncement in the early part of his reign. Accordingly, we are to understand it to mean that no one of Saul's posterity was to rule after him—an admonition to look to David's stock whence was to stem,

1 1 Kings 15.23-29.

according to the flesh, Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and man.

In many Latin versions we find one of the above verses in the following form: 'The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thy hand.' But I have quoted from the Greek text: 'The Lord hath rent the kingdom from Israel from thy hand'—the expression 'from Israel' being equivalent to 'from thy hand.' In this way, Samuel stood figuratively for the people of Israel which was to lose the kingdom when our Lord Jesus Christ would come to reign—spiritually, not carnally—in the New Testament. The reference to Him in the words, 'and he hath given it to thy neighbor,' is an allusion to racial relationship, for Christ in the flesh derived from Israel just as did Saul.

With respect to the clause next in order, 'who is good above thee,' this expression can certainly be interpreted to mean 'better than thee,' and some have so rendered it. But a better rendering is the following paraphrase: Because he is good, therefore shall he be above thee, in harmony with the prophecy: 'Until I make thy enemies thy footstool.'[2] Israel, indeed, must be numbered among the enemies of Christ. And because Israel persecuted Him, Christ took away its dominion, although there was an Israel, too, without guile—the grain, so to speak, amidst all that chaff. This latter Israel, of course, was the mother of the Apostle, and of a host of martyrs, beginning with Stephen; the mother, too, of a host of churches which St. Paul cites as giving glory to God by their conversion.[3]

It is this dichotomy which is without doubt the theme of the verse that comes next: 'And Israel shall be divided in two' —into one Israel hostile to Christ, and another Israel cleaving to Christ, the former belonging to the slave-girl, the latter to the free. Earlier, indeed, these two Israels were found to-

2 Ps. 109.1.
3 Cf. Gal. 1.24.

gether, as when Abraham was still attached to the bondwoman—a condition continuing until such time as the barren woman, made fruitful by Christ's grace, could cry out: 'Cast out this slave-girl with her son.'[4]

It is true, of course, that because of Solomon's sins Israel was split into two parts under his son, Roboam;[5] and that this division went unrepaired, with each segment under its own kings, until the day when the whole people was overthrown with enormous loss by the Chaldaeans and carried away by them. Even so, what was all this to Saul? If this were the theme of the threat, it would more fittingly have been leveled at David, Solomon's father. Besides, in our own day, the Hebrew race is no longer split in two. It is simply scattered all over the world, united only in cherishing a common error.

It was a different kind of division which God foredoomed for that kingdom and race which Saul personified—one everlasting and unchangeable, as can be gathered from what follows: 'But the triumpher in Israel will not spare, and will not be moved to repentance: for he is not a man that he should repent. He threatens and does not persist.' That is, man threatens and does not persist—not God, however, who does not repent like men. Where we do read in Scripture that God repents, this means that human affairs themselves change, while the divine foreknowledge of them remains unchanged. When, therefore, God is said not to repent, this means that the human situation is to remain the same.

Accordingly, we see that the divine verdict on the division of Israel expressed in this passage is absolutely beyond undoing, absolutely perpetual. All Jews of any description who have come over from Israel to Christ in the past or are coming today or who will come over in the future do not really belong to Israel as far as God's foreknowledge is con-

4 Gen. 21.10.
5 3 Kings 12.16,17.

cerned—whatever may be their natural unity as a race of human beings.[6] The fact is that no Israelite who chooses Christ and stands firm in his conversion is any longer an Israelite, in the sense of belonging to those who stubbornly remain Christ's foes to the end of their lives. It is these converted Israelites who are to be everlastingly divided from the others; and this is what the prophecy foretold. The truth is that the Old Testament of Mount Sinai, 'bringing forth children unto bondage,'[7] now serves no purpose but to bear witness to the New. Otherwise, the words of St. Paul would not be true: 'Yes, down to this very day when Moses is read, the veil covers their hearts'; but when any of them turn from the Old Testament to Christ, 'the veil shall be taken away.'[8] What happens is that the deepest aspirations of those who make the change are shifted from the Old Testament to the New, whereupon they begin to look for spiritual —rather than earthly—happiness.

This transfer of hope is hinted at in an action of the great Prophet, Samuel, prior to King Saul's anointing, when he cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf and was heard. Offering a burnt-sacrifice, as foreigners flocked forward to battle God's people (and the Lord thundered over them so that they became rattled and, coming to grips with Israel, were vanquished), he took a stone and set it up between the old Masphath and the new. This stone he called Abennezer, which means 'the stone of our helper,' and said: 'Thus far the Lord hath helped us.'[9] Masphath means 'expectation.' And that stone of our helper stood for the mediatorship of our Saviour, through whom one must pass over from the old Masphath to the new, that is, from the expectation of an

6 . . . *non erant inde secundum Dei praescientiam, non secundum generis humani unam eandemque naturam.*
7 Gal. 4.24.
8 Cf. 2 Cor. 3.13-16.
9 1 Kings 7.9-12.

illusory earthly happiness in an earthly kingdom to the expectation in the New Testament of a true spiritual happiness to be attained in the kingdom of heaven. And, because there is nothing better to hope for, it is to this point that God helps us.

Chapter 8

The time has now come for me to set forth—within the limits of my present theme—what God promised to David, who succeeded Saul. It was this displacement of Saul that prefigured the ultimate displacement, on account of which so many of God's words were spoken and written down.

Because things at first had gone very well for David, he began to entertain the idea of building a house for God, none other than that gloriously renowned Temple which King Solomon, his son, later on actually did build. As he was mulling over this project, the Prophet Nathan received a message from God for delivery to the king. In this message God said that David personally would never build Him a house, and that He had not, in all those long years, commanded any one of His people to build Him a house of cedar. Here is the text: 'And now thus shalt thou speak to my servant David: Thus saith the Lord of hosts: I took thee out of the pastures from following the sheep to be ruler over my people Israel; and I have been with thee wheresoever thou hast walked, and have slain all thy enemies from before thy face; and I have made thee a great man, like unto the name of the great ones that are on the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, and they shall dwell therein, and shall be disturbed no more: neither shall the children of iniquity afflict them any more as they did before, from the day that I appointed judges over my people Israel: and I will give thee rest from all thy

enemies. And the Lord foretelleth to thee that thou shalt build him a house. And when thy days shall be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house to my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son: and if he commit any iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. But my mercy I will not take away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before my face. And his house shall be faithful, and his kingdom for ever before my face, and his throne shall be firm forever.'[1]

Anyone who thinks tnat this grandiose promise was made good in Solomon is very far from the truth, for he pays too close attention to the verse: 'He shall build a house to my name.' (Solomon did, in fact, erect that splendid Temple.) Meanwhile, he neglects to note the verse that follows: 'And his house shall be faithful, and his kingdom for ever before my face.' I suggest that such a reader take a good long look at Solomon's house—a house filled with foreign females worshiping false gods. Let him take a good look at Solomon, as well, the one-time wise monarch, bewitched by these women and dragged down into idolatry. Further, let him not venture to play with the idea that God made a lying promise, or that it was beyond His power to foresee that Solomon and his house would be such as they, in fact, turned out to be.

No, we should have no misgivings on this score, even if we did not see the pledge redeemed in Christ our Lord, 'who was born according to the flesh of the offspring of David,'[2] and were in the silly position of vainly looking here for some-

1 2 Kings 7.8-16.
2 Rom. 1.3.

body else, as are the carnal Jews. For, even they are convinced that Solomon was not the son our text promises to David. That is why they admit that they are still hoping for the man in question to come along—a strange blindness, when one reflects that He who was promised has so manifestly revealed Himself.

There was, admittedly, in Solomon, such as he was, some faint forepicturing of the great reality that was to come—in so much, for instance, as he did build the Temple, and did have peaceful sway (his name means 'the peacemaker') and was, at the outset, admirable. Nevertheless, while he foreshadowed Christ our Lord, he did not in his person resemble Him. This role explains why Scripture has certain passages, prophecies seemingly touching the king himself, in which his exploits are merely used to foresketch, after a fashion, the outline of things to come. Besides the divinely inspired historical books in which his reign is described, there is, for example, Psalm 71 which bears his name in its inscription. Now, this psalm contains so much that cannot possibly be fitted in with Solomon's life—that does, on the other hand, apply to Christ our Lord with perfectly pellucid propriety[3]—that it makes clear as daylight how in Solomon there was only a faint adumbration of the substantial reality reserved for our contemplation in Christ. For instance, we know the boundaries of Solomon's kingdom. Yet, in this psalm we read (not to speak of other irrelevancies): 'And he shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.'[4] Here is a prediction we actually see realized in Christ. For, Christ's sway began at the River Jordan, when he was saluted and baptized by John—after which disciples began to avow His claims and call Him, not Master alone, but Lord.

3 . . . *aptissima perspicuitate conveniunt.*
4 Ps. 71.8.

Solomon, it will be remembered, succeeded to the throne during his father David's liftetime[5]—a kind of succession unique among Jewish kings—for no other reason save to furnish further clear evidence that Solomon is not the man our prophecy proclaims. Nathan says to David: 'And when thy days shall be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.' In view of these words, how can anyone think that, because of the later verse, 'He shall build a house to my name,' Solomon is the subject of the prophecy, and fail to realize that in view of the earlier words, 'And when thy days shall be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will raise up thy seed after thee,' a different 'Peacemaker' is promised—One to be raised up, not before David's demise as Solomon was, but afterwards? It makes no difference how long was the lapse of time before the destined coming of Jesus Christ. The thing that is beyond question is that He who was promised in such terms to King David was destined to come after his death, the very same who was to build a house for God such as we rejoice to see rising up today, a house not fashioned of timbers and stones, but of human beings. It is these people, believers in Christ, whom St. Paul addresses in these words: 'Holy is the temple of God, and this temple you are.'[6]

Chapter 9

To predict the same providence, Psalm 88, inscribed 'Of understanding, for Ethan the Ezrahite,' rehearses God's promises made to King David, and has a number of things to say very like those which I have just quoted from Kings. For

5 3 Kings 1.32-40.
6 1 Cor. 3.17.

example: 'I have sworn to David my servant: Thy seed will I settle for ever.' Then further on: 'Thou spokest in a vision of thy saints, and saidst: I have laid help upon one that is mighty, and have exalted one chosen out of my people. I have found David my servant: with my holy oil I have anointed him. For my hand shall help him: and my arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall have no advantage over him; nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt him. And I will cut down his enemies before his face; and them that hate him I will put to flight. And my truth and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. And I will set his hand in the sea; and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry out to me: Thou art my father, my God, and the support of my salvation. And I will make him my firstborn, high above the kings of the earth. And I will keep my mercy for him for ever: and my covenant faithful to him. And I will make his seed to endure forevermore: and his throne as the days of heaven.'[1]

This entire passage, when rightly understood, concerns our Lord Jesus Christ (under cover of David's name, to be sure), on account of the form of a servant which our Mediator took on when He was born of David's seed of the Virgin. In the immediately subsequent passage there is talk of His children's sins—a text very like the one I have already quoted from Kings, and one would be rather inclined to put it down as referring to Solomon. There (that is, in Kings), we read: 'And if he commit any iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men, and with the touches of the children of men. But my mercy I will not take away from him.'[2] The touches, of course, are corrective chastisements, in harmony with that other text: 'Touch ye not my anointed,'[3] that is, do not injure

1 Ps. 88.4,5,20-30.
2 2 Kings 7.14,15.
3 Ps. 104.15.

them. In our psalm, too, as if David were the ultimate subject, something similar is said: 'And if his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments, if they profane my justices, and keep not my commandments, I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes. But my mercy I will not take away from him.' Note that, despite the fact the psalm is talking of David's children, not of David personally, it ends this verse with 'from him' rather than 'from them.' This expression, however, when read rightly, has the same force. For, to apply this section to Christ: He, the Head of the Church, has no personal sins of any kind requiring God's repression by means of human chastisement with mercy kept in store. But, there are such sins in His people, the members of His Body. 'His iniquity,' in Kings, and 'the iniquity of his children,' in the psalm, therefore, were so devised to make us understand that whatever is said of Christ's Body may be said, too, after a fashion, of Christ Himself. Surely, to support this understanding, He Himself cried out from heaven when Saul was persecuting the faithful who are His Body, 'Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me?'[4]

The psalm goes on: 'Nor will I suffer my truth to fail. Neither will I profane my covenant: and the words which proceed from my mouth I will not make void. Once have I sworn by my holiness: if I shall lie to David.' This last clause means I will on no account lie to David, a common mode of Biblical expression. Then God goes on to add the substance of His truthful promise: 'His seed shall endure for ever. And his throne as the sun before me: and as the moon perfect for ever, and a faithful witness in heaven.'

4 Acts 9.4.

Chapter 10

The Psalmist proclaims powerfully the massive assurances of this promise. Then, lest anyone should think they were to be realized in Solomon—as if men were going to hope so, and to hope in vain—he goes on: 'But thou hast rejected and despised, O Lord.' And, indeed, rejection of Solomon's kingdom came in Solomon's progeny, even to the destruction of the terrestrial Jerusalem, capital of his kingdom; worse still, even to the ruin of the Temple he had built. Lest anyone think, however, in the light of these catastrophes, that God had acted contrary to His promises, the psalm at once adds: 'Thou hast put off the coming of thine anointed.'[1]

The Lord's anointed was to be delayed. Obviously, then, Solomon was not the man, nor David either. All of the Hebrew kings, to be sure, were called the Lord's anointed because of their anointing with that mystical chrism—not David and his successors alone, but Saul, too, their first king, whom David himself saluted as the 'Lord's anointed.' There was, nevertheless, but one true Anointed, whom those kings symbolized in virtue of their prophetic anointing. And, according to the calculations of men, who looked to find him in David or Solomon, his coming was long delayed. God, just the same, was planning for Him to appear in His own good time.

Further on, the psalm tells us what happened, in the interim of waiting, to the kingdom of the earthly Jerusalem, wherein, of course, this true Anointed One was expected to reign: 'Thou hast overthrown the covenant of thy servant: thou hast profaned his sanctuary on the earth. Thou hast broken down all his hedges: thou hast made his strength fear. All that pass by the way have robbed him: he is become a reproach to the neighbors. Thou hast set up the right

1 Cf. Ps. 88.39.

hand of them that oppress him: thou hast made all of his enemies to rejoice. Thou hast turned away the help of his sword: and hast not assisted him in battle. Thou has made his purification to cease: and thou hast cast his throne down to the ground. Thou hast shortened the days of his time: thou hast covered him with confusion.'[2]

All of these misfortunes, in fact, did befall the slave-girl Jerusalem, even though some of her kings were sons of the free Jerusalem, governing their domain as God's agents for the time being, but keeping in true faith the kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem, their mother, and hoping in the true Christ to come.

How the misfortunes which the psalm predicts actually befell that kingdom, history reveals, if you care to read it.

Chapter 11

Having uttered these predictions, the Prophet turns to prayer. But even his prayer turns into further prophecy: 'How long, O Lord, turnest thou away in the end?'[1] One must supply the words, 'thy face,' as in another text we find them: 'How long dost thou turn away thy face from me?'[2] With this meaning in mind, some manuscripts read, not 'turnest thou away,' but 'shalt thou be turned away.' Still, it may be possible to take 'turnest thou away' to mean 'turnest thou away thy mercy, which thou didst promise to David.' As for the expression, 'in the end,' it can mean only 'unto the end'—the very last days, that is, when the Jews, too, shall believe in Jesus Christ, and before which time the calamities which the Psalmist wept over were fated to happen.

2 Ps. 88.40-45.

1 Ps. 88.47.
2 Ps. 12.1.

He goes on: 'Shall thy anger burn like fire? Remember what my substance is.' You will find no better interpretation of this verse than one making out Jesus to be the 'substance' of this race because His flesh was thence derived. The psalm continues: 'For hast thou made all of the children of men in vain?' In vain, indeed; for, if the 'substance' of Israel were not the one Son of Man by whom many sons of men were destined to be set free, God would surely have made all the sons of men in vain. Human nature in its totality, of course, had fallen off from verity into vanity[3] by the sin of the first man, as another psalm has it: 'Man is like to vanity; his days pass away like a shadow.'[4] Still, God did not vainly create all men, because He does, through Jesus as Mediator, free some men from vanity. Others, whom His foreknowledge saw as beyond all setting free—even such He did not create in vain. For, in the perfectly righteous and exquisitely proportioned disposition of rational creation as a whole, even these subserve His ends. They contribute, for example, to the perfecting of His elect, and constitute a term for comparison between the two cities.

The Psalmist goes on: 'Who is the man that shall live and not see death: that shall deliver his soul from the hand of hell?' None other save Jesus Christ, the 'substance' of Israel from David's seed—the very same of whom St. Paul says: 'Christ, having risen from the dead, dies now no more, death shall no longer have dominion over him.'[5] For He shall so live and not see death that, paradoxically, He shall already have died; but shall have delivered His soul from the power of hell, whereto He descended to break the infernal bonds of certain men detained there. And He shall have delivered His soul in virtue of that power He spoke of in the Gospel: 'I

3 . . . *in vanitatem de veritate.*
4 Ps. 143.4.
5 Rom. 6.9.

have the power to lay down my life, and I have the power to take it up again.'[6]

Chapter 12

The remainder of the psalm in question goes like this: 'Lord, where are thy ancient mercies, according to what thou didst swear to David in thy truth? Be mindful, O Lord, of the reproach of thy servants which I have held in my bosom of many nations; wherewith thy enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith thy enemies have reproached the change of thy Christ.'[1] Hereupon, a man may reasonably ask: Who is speaking in this passage, the Israelites who yearned for a fulfillment in themselves of the promise given to David, or the Christians who are Israelites, not in flesh, but in spirit? Well, these words were spoken or written in Ethan's day. His name occurs in the inscription of this psalm, and he was a contemporary of King David. Obviously, then, the words, 'Lord, where are thy ancient mercies, according to what thou didst swear to David in thy truth,' would not have been chosen unless the Prophet were assuming the role of men who were to be born a great deal later on—men to whom the date of the pledges made to King David would be antiquity.

This text speaks of the passion of Christ as a 'change' in the sense that by dying Christ was made immortal. We can understand, accordingly, that 'many nations' reproached the Christians with His passion when they persecuted them. Or this 'change' of Christ can be taken in another way, namely, as thrown up to the Israelites, inasmuch as He who was expected to be theirs became in fact the beloved of the Gentiles—the many nations, that is, who, believing in Him

6 John 10.18.

1 Ps. 88.50-53.

through the New Testament, reproach the Jews with this 'change' as they remain in the Old. This would explain the following words, 'Be mindful, O Lord, of the reproach of thy servants,' as meaning that the Israelites through the mindfulness and mercy of God will, once this reproach has been ended, themselves also believe in Christ.

But I think the former of these two interpretations the more fitting, for the verse I have just quoted does not sound very well on the lips of those enemies of Christ whom we reproach with the fact that Christ left them and came over to the Gentiles. Surely, such Jews are not to be called 'servants' of God. They do sound well, however, on the lips of those who, in the midst of the burdensome and degrading persecutions suffered for Christ's sake, could call to mind that a lofty kingdom had been promised to David's seed—those in whom this passionate prayer for such recompense revealed no despairing, but only asking, seeking, knocking: 'Lord, where are thy ancient mercies, according to what thou didst swear to David in thy truth? Be mindful, O Lord, of the reproach of thy servants which I have held in my bosom' (that is, which I have inwardly borne with patience) 'of many nations; wherewith thy enemies have reproached, O Lord; wherewith thy enemies have reproached the change of thy Christ.' For, the Jews thought Christ's change was Christ's finish.[2] What, then, does the 'Be mindful, O Lord' mean save 'be mindful to have pity and to pay back, for the lowliness I have patiently endured, the sublimity which you swore to David in your truth'?

If, on the other hand, we assign these words to the Jews, they can be fittingly pronounced by those servants of God who, before Christ's Incarnation, were carried off into captivity following upon the fall of the earthly Jerusalem. These people could have taken the 'change' of Christ to mean that

2 . . . *non eam putantes commutationem, sed consumptionem.*

they were not to expect from Him such brief, terrestrial and carnal happiness as was theirs in King Solomon's few years, but a heavenly and spiritual happiness to be awaited in a spirit of faith—a species of happiness unknown to the unbelieving Gentiles. And when these Gentiles gloated over and threw up to these Jews their enslaved condition, with what did they ignorantly reproach those who knew better save the 'change' of their Christ?

The concluding words of the psalm which follow at once, 'The blessing of the Lord forevermore. So be it. So be it,' can be satisfactorily applied to the whole of God's people belonging to the heavenly Jerusalem, both those who lay hidden in the Old prior to the revelation of the New Testament, and those who, now that the New has been revealed, openly belong to Christ. For, indeed, the Lord's blessing on David's seed was not exhausted in any particular period, the reign of Solomon, for instance. It is an eternal one to be hoped for, and it is in the absolute assurance of this hope that the words are uttered, 'So be it. So be it'—words whose very repetition is a confirmation of this hope.

David, understanding this, says in the second Book of Kings (from which I digressed to discuss this psalm): 'Thou didst also speak of the house of thy servant for a long time to come.' And, further on, 'And now begin and bless the house of thy servant that it may endure forever,' etc.[3] At that time, David was about to beget his son through whom his lineage would be carried down to Christ; through whom, in turn, his house was to be everlasting—indeed, identified with the house of God. It was to be called the 'house of David' because of David's stock and, simultaneously, the 'house of God' because it was a temple to God made not of stones, but of men. In this house God's people shall everlastingly dwell with their God and in their God, and God with His people and in His people, God filling His people, His people filled with their

3 2 Kings 7.19-29.

God, so that 'God may be all in all'[4]—the very same God being their prize in peace who was their strength in battle.[5]

It was with this in view that, when Nathan had said: 'And the Lord foretelleth to thee, that thou shalt build him a house,' David said further on: 'Because thou, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to the ear of thy servant, saying: I will build thee a house.'[6] This is a house which we build by living virtuously, and which God builds by helping us to live virtuously, for, 'unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it.'[7]

Only, however, when this house receives its final consecration will the words God spoke by Nathan's lips come true: 'And I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them, and they shall dwell therein, and shall be disturbed no more: neither shall the children of iniquity afflict them any more as they did before, from the day that I appointed judges over my people Israel.'[8]

Chapter 13

It would be folly for anyone to look for so great a boon of peace in this present life here on this earth. Who, then, will venture to think that King Solomon's peace fulfilled this prophecy? Scripture, it is true, does extol highly the peace of his reign—but only to the degree that it foreshadowed a peace yet-to-be. Meanwhile, Scripture was wide awake to counter any day-dreaming to the contrary, for, immediately following the words, 'Neither shall the children of iniquity afflict them any more, as they did before,' you find: 'from

4 1 Cor. 15.28.
5 . . . *ipse in pace praemium, qui virtus in bello.*
6 2 Kings 7.11,27.
7 Ps. 126.1.
8 2 Kings 7.10,11.

the day that I appointed judges over my people Israel.' Now, judges were established over them from the time they took over the promised land and before the monarchy began. And even during this era, the children of iniquity, that is, foreign foes, afflicted them, for we read they had now peace, now war. Even so, you can find periods of peace in the age of the Judges longer than that of Solomon who reigned forty years. Specifically, under the judge named Aod, there were eighty years of peace.[1]

Accordingly, let no one believe that the prophecy we are discussing concerned Solomon's day—much less the times of any other king—for no king reigned in such peace as he did. Besides, the Jews at no time in their entire history were so solidly established in government as not to have to worry about possible enemy conquest. In fact, human vicissitudes being what they are, no nation was ever so secure as to be free from all fear of hostile attacks on its life.

The place, therefore, which the prophecy promises, this abode of peace and security, is an everlasting one, meant for those who are to live everlastingly in our mother, the free Jerusalem, home of the true people of Israel—a name that means 'beholding God.' And it is in yearning for this recompense that we must live our lives, in holiness and by faith in this wearisome time of wayfaring.

Chapter 14

As the City of God moved along in the course of history, the first king to rule in that earthly Jerusalem, which foreshadowed the one that was to come, was David. He was a man skilled in the shaping of songs, but one who loved the harmony of music less as a common emotional indulgence

1 Judges 3.30.

than as a religious dedication to His God, who was the true God. And it was to serve Him that David made use of music in order to express a tremendous truth by means of mystical symbols, for what can better suggest the unity in variety of a well-ordered city than the harmony produced by the rational and controlled concord of differing tones?[1]

Nearly all of David's prophecies are to be found in his Book of 150 Psalms. There are some who maintain that out of this number only those were composed by David which bear his name. Still others say that only those prefaced with the note 'Of David' were written by him and that those marked 'For David' were written by others and passed off as his. This opinion, however, is rendered untenable by our Saviour Himself, who says in the Gospel that David in the Spirit calls Christ his Lord.[2] Our Lord was quoting the opening of Psalm 109, which goes like this: 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool.' Now, this psalm is not inscribed 'Of David' but 'For David,' as are many others.

For this reason I prefer the opinion of those who are persuaded that all 150 Psalms are David's work; but that he prefaced certain ones with the names of other men (who had some symbolic relevance to the matter in hand) and left the remainder uninscribed, as the Lord inspired him in a flexible arrangement, which may be dark to us but is not for that reason devoid of meaning.

No insuperable difficulty for this position is raised by the fact that some psalms bear the names of Prophets who lived long after David's day and even seem to present them as speakers. For the prophetic Spirit could have revealed to

1 . . . *qui harmoniam musicam non vulgari voluptate, sed fideli voluntate dilexerit eaque Deo suo, qui verus est Deus, mystica rei magnae figuratione servierit. Diversorum enim sonorum rationalis moderatusque concentus concordi varietate compactam bene ordinatae civitatis insinuat unitatem.*

2 Matt. 22.43,44.

King David in the act of prophesying the names of these Prophets-to-be with a view to his foresinging something relevant to them; as was the case when the name of King Josias, more than 300 years before his birth and reign, was revealed to a certain Prophet, who proceeded to foretell even some of the king's exploits.

Chapter 15

At this point in the present Book, my readers may expect me to deal with those prophecies in David's Psalms which concern our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. It was partly to meet this expectation that I have just dealt with one psalm; but it would be difficult to satisfy the reader fully simply because the material is too abundant—not because there is too little of it. The fact is that if I am to avoid saying too much, I simply cannot cite all that David has to say. On the other hand, I am afraid that, if I limit myself to one or two texts only, informed readers may think that I am by-passing more important ones. Besides, since the sense of any one verse should be supported by the pattern of the whole psalm or, at least, should not be contradicted by the context, I may appear to be arbitrarily plucking texts out of their context to bolster my own views, like a man who makes a patchwork of verses on a theme quite unlike that of the longer poem from which the verses have been culled. To show the valid use of any excerpt, the entire psalm must be expounded. Now, how much work this entails, my own book,[1] and those of others who have done this, are proof enough. These books, then, I recommend to any reader who may have the inclination and opportunity to read them. Anyone who does so will discover how abundant and magnificent are the

1 *Enarrationes in psalmos.*

prophecies of David, king and prophet, touching Christ the King and the City which He founded, the Church.

Chapter 16

Although there exist on any prophetic theme utterances which are literal, plain-spoken and perfectly clear, there has to be some intermingling of figurative language. It is this latter kind of thing which forces upon teachers the laborious task of discussion and explanation—more particularly for the benefit of those who are rather slow to understand. Nevertheless, there are texts which, on a very first hearing, obviously concern Christ and the Church—even if they contain a residue of less readily intelligible points to be clarified at one's leisure. Here is an example from the Book of Psalms:

'My heart hath uttered a good word; I speak my words to the king; my tongue is the pen of a scrivener that writeth swiftly. Thou art beautiful above the sons of men; grace is poured abroad in thy lips; therefore hath God blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty. With thy comeliness and thy beauty set out, proceed prosperously, and reign. Because of truth and meekness and justice; and thy right hand shall conduct thee wonderfully. Thy arrows are sharp; under thee shall people fall, into the hearts of the king's enemies. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness. Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. Myrrh and aloes and cassia perfume thy garments, from the ivory houses; out of which the daughters of kings have delighted thee in thy glory.'[1]

In this passage the reader hears one spoken of as God whose

1 Ps. 44.2-10.

throne is for ever and ever, one anointed by God—as God anoints, of course, with a spiritual chrism visible only to the eyes of faith. Now, is there any reader—however dull-witted —who does not recognize in this person the Christ whom we preach, in whom we believe? Is there any insider so ill-informed in his faith, any outsider so deaf to its universally known character, as not to be aware that Christ's very name is derived from 'chrism,' that is, from His anointing? Anyone, at least, who is already subject to Him whose reign is based on truth, meekness, and justice, will recognize in this description Christ the King. After that, he may, at his leisure, look into the meaning of the rest that is spoken figuratively—how, for instance, He is 'beautiful above the sons of men' (with a spiritual comeliness all the more worthy of love and admiration on that account), what his 'sword' and 'arrows' may be, and much else that is cast in metaphorical language.

Next let him examine in the following text the Church united in spiritual marriage and divine love to her tremendous Spouse:

'The queen stood on thy right hand, in gilded clothing; surrounded with variety. Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear, and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God, and him shall they adore. And the daughters of Tyre with gifts, yea, all the rich among the people, shall entreat thy countenance. All the glory of the king's daughter is within in golden borders, clothed round about with varieties. After her shall virgins be brought to the king; her neighbors shall be brought to thee. They shall be brought with gladness and rejoicing; they shall be brought into the temple of the king. Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee; thou shall make them princes over all the earth. They shall remember thy name throughout all generations. Therefore shall people praise thee forever; yea, for ever and ever.'[2]

2 Ps. 44.11-18.

In my opinion there is no one so lacking in common sense as to imagine that these words are portrait and praise of some insignificant woman—a fit wife, if you please, for Him to whom the words were addressed: 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a sceptre of uprightness. Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows'—Christ, obviously, above all Christian men. These 'fellows' are those who are chosen from all peoples to form, by their unity and harmony that Queen, who is called, in another psalm, 'The city of the great King.'[3] By mystical application she is also called Sion, a word which means 'spying out,' for she spies out the great good of the hereafter and keeps her gaze intently fixed upon it. By the same kind of application, she is called Jerusalem, but I have already spoken abundantly on this point.

Her foe is the Devil's city, Babylon, which means 'confusion.' Yet it is out of this very Babylon that our Queen is created among all nations, by liberation and regeneration, passing over from the worst to the best of kings, from the Devil's dominion to Christ's. This transfer explains the words addressed to her: 'Forget thy people and thy father's house.' To this godless city belong those Israelites who are such according to the flesh alone—not those who are so in faith—for they are among the enemies of this great King and His Queen. For, when Christ came to them and was slain by them, He became instead the King of those whom He never beheld in the flesh. This is the meaning of the words our King speaks in one of the prophetic psalms: 'Thou wilt deliver me from the contradictions of the people; thou wilt make me head of the Gentiles. A people, which I knew not, hath served me; at the hearing of the ear they have obeyed me.'[4] That is, the Gentiles, with whom Christ had no physical

3 Ps. 47.3.
4 Ps. 17.44,45.

contact, believed in Him when He was preached to them, so that quite properly it is said of them, 'At the hearing of the ear they have obeyed me,' for faith comes by hearing. These people together with the authentic Israelites in both flesh and faith make up the City of God which became the mother of Christ Himself, in the flesh, during the time when she existed among the Israelites alone, for the Virgin Mary, in whom He became incarnate, was a citizen of this City.

Of this City another psalm says: 'A mother is Sion, a man shall say, and a man is begotten in her, and the Highest himself hath founded her.'[5] Who is this Highest save God? Accordingly, we must say that Christ as God founded this City in the Patriarchs and Prophets, even before, as a man, He became, through Mary, a citizen.

Long, long ago in prophecy this royal City was told: 'For thy fathers sons are born to thee: thou shalt make them princes over all the earth.'[6] This prediction we see realized before our very eyes, because out of her sons come her rulers and fathers all over the earth, as the nations hasten to join in praising her with a praising that shall go on for ever and ever. These truths are perfectly clear and, therefore, any interpretations of other parts of the psalm, which are somewhat obscure by reason of metaphorical language, must be consistent with what we know to be true.

Chapter 17

So much for this perfectly obvious heralding of Christ as King. We must handle no differently another psalm in which He is proclaimed, with equal clarity, as Priest—the psalm

5 Ps. 86.5.
6 Ps. 44.17.

beginning: 'The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool.'[1]

Christ's position at the Father's right hand in heaven is at present an object not of vision, but of faith; it is in effect even now, but we shall witness it only at the end. Similarly, the position of His enemies under His feet is not a thing we can see at present; this, too, we believe will happen, and later on we shall behold it as a fact. What follows, on the other hand, 'The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion; rule thou in the midst of thy enemies,' is so clear that to deny it a man would have to be not only faithless and infelicitious in interpretation, but downright shameless as well.[2] Why, even our adversaries do not deny that the law of Christ came forth out of Sion—the law that we call His Gospel and identify with the sceptre of His power. Further, their frenzied and sickly and impotent opposition to Him is proof positive, furnished by his very foes, that He rules in the midst of His enemies.

Next, take the words written a little further on: 'The Lord hath sworn and he will not repent' (words meaning that what follows has been unchangeably decreed): 'Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.' Now, given the fact that the priesthood and sacrifice according to the order of Aaron are nowhere to be found at the present time, and that priests everywhere today are offering, under Christ the Priest, the sacrifice which Melchisedech symbolically offered when he blessed Abraham, who can fail to recognize the identity of the personage the psalm addresses?

My point, therefore, is that the elements in this psalm which are somewhat less clearly put are, when rightly understood, read with reference to these perfectly clear general themes. I have already done this in my sermons to the people.

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1 Ps. 109.1.

2 . . . *ut non solum infideliter et infeliciter, sed etiam impudenter negetur.*

Another example. Take the psalm in which Christ is presented as predicting the humiliations of His passion: 'They have dug my hands and feet. They have numbered all my bones. And they have looked and stared upon me.'[3] Surely, these words depict His body stretched out on the cross, His hands and feet affixed thereto and punctured through with the piercing nails; His displaying of Himself, in this plight, for men to look and stare upon. The ensuing detail: 'They parted my garments amongst them; and upon my vesture they cast lots'—even the manner in which this prophecy was realized is told in the Gospel narrative.[4] So—once again—the parts of this psalm which are less obvious in meaning are correctly interpreted only when they are made to harmonize with these sections which have had such striking and unmistakable realization. For example, in this very psalm certain predictions, made long before the event, are in full swing of effectuation for all the world to see, things which we can study at close range, under our very eyes, and unlike the prophetic fulfillments, over and done with, which are objects of faith. Take this passage, for instance: 'All the end of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord; and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in His sight. For the kingdom is the Lord's; and he shall have dominion over the nations.'

Chapter 18

The prophetic psalms are by no means silent on the subject of His Resurrection, either. What other meaning can be taken from these words in Psalm 3, sung in the person of Christ: 'I have slept and have taken my rest: I have risen

3 Ps. 21.17,18.
4 Matt. 27.35.

up, because the Lord hath protected me'?[1] For, unless one sees in this sleep the death, and in this awaking the resurrection of Christ thus prophesied, one is reduced to the silly supposition that the Prophet wished to communicate to us the really remarkable news that he himself fell asleep and later on woke up!

There is a text even more striking in Psalm 40. In this passage the Mediator is represented as recounting, after the fashion of prophecy, certain things as past which He was foretelling as to come (because things to come exist in the foreknowledge and predestination of God as if already accomplished). 'My enemies have spoken evil against me: "When shall he die and his name perish?" And if he came in to see me, he spoke vain things; his heart gathered together iniquity to itself. He went out and spoke to the same purpose. All my enemies whispered together against me; they devised evils to me. They determined against me an unjust word: shall he that sleepeth rise again no more?'[2] The very position of these concluding words will suffer no other interpretation than this paraphrase: 'Shall he that dies come not back to life again?' The previous words prove that it was His death that was being plotted and planned by His foes, through the agency of him who went in to see Him, and went out again to betray Him. How could anyone not think of Judas, the disciple turned traitor? And because His foes were going to execute their plan, that is, kill Him, the concluding verse was added to show that, in slaying One destined to rise again, their malice was doomed for total frustration. The verse says, as it were: 'What, in your folly, are you up to? It will be a crime for you, and only a sleep for me.'

1 Ps. 3.6.
2 Ps. 40.6-9.

The verses that follow, however, indicate that they were not going to escape the consequences of this monstrous wrongdoing: 'For even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me' (that is, hath trampled upon me). 'But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon me, and raise me up again; and I will requite them.' How can anyone who knows that, after Christ's death and resurrection, the carnage and devastation of war wholly uprooted the Jews from their ancestral home deny the relevance of this prophecy? For, the One whom they slew did rise from the dead and did pay then back, for the time being, with passing punishment—not to mention what is in store for the unrepentant when He shall judge the living and the dead. 'Who ate my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.' The Lord Jesus Himself quoted this verse (and said that it was then realized in Himself) when He revealed to His Apostles the identity of His betrayer by passing him the bread.[3] The clause, 'in whom I trusted,' of course, does not apply fittingly to the Head, but to His Body, for the Saviour was aware of Judas' intent from the beginning. Had He not just said of him: 'One of you is a devil'?[4] Frequently, as a matter of fact, He assumes the role of His members, transferring to Himself what actually applies to them, because the Body and Head together make the one Christ. Thus, in the Gospel, when Christ said, 'I was hungry and you gave me to eat,' He went on to explain: 'As long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me.'[5] Thus, what Christ meant when He said that He trusted in Judas at the time Judas became an Apostle was that His disciples trusted in Judas.

Meanwhile, the Jews are still looking for a Christ—but one

3 John 13.18,26.
4 John 13.21.
5 Matt. 25.40.

they hope will not die. For this reason they think our Christ is not the one whom the Law and Prophets foretold, so they are dreaming up a kind of Christ of their own, one who is to have nothing to do with suffering and death. This explains why they have the astonishing folly and blindness to contend that the words I have been quoting signify mere sleeping and waking and have nothing to do with death and resurrection. But Psalm 15, as well, proclaims to them: 'Therefore my heart hath been glad and my tongue hath rejoiced; moreover my flesh also shall rest in hope. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption.'[6] Now, who save Him who rose on the third day was in a position to say that his flesh rested in hope, that his soul, not left in hell, would swiftly return to reanimate his flesh, that his flesh would not undergo corruption as other corpses rot away? Surely, no one can maintain that all of this was verified in David, king and prophet!

Listen, too, to Psalm 67: 'Our God is the God of salvation; even of the Lord the departure was by death.'[7] Could anything be plainer? The God of salvation is the Lord Jesus, whose very name means 'saviour' or 'saving'—a name explained to us before He was born of the Virgin: 'She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.'[8] And because this salvation from sin was to be accomplished through the shedding of His blood, His departure from this life obviously had to be by way of death. The immediate sequence between 'Our God is a God of salvation' and 'Even the departure of the Lord was by death' shows that He was to save us precisely by dying. But the 'Even of the Lord' is an expression of amazement equivalent to: Such is the miserable life of mortal men

6 Ps. 15.9,10.
7 Ps. 67.21.
8 Matt. 1.21.

that even the Lord Himself will not depart from it except through death.

Chapter 19

The fact that the Jews so resolutely refuse to surrender before the clarity of this prophetic witness, which has been so undeniably fulfilled, is itself a fulfillment in them of a prophecy set down in the psalm next in order. In this psalm, Christ, represented as prophesying His passion, is made to foretell a detail which we find explicitly carried out in the Gospel: 'And they gave me gall for my food, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.'[1] Then, having as it were, banqueted at this table spread before Him, He at once introduces the passage: 'Let their table become as a snare before them, and a recompense, and a stumblingblock. Let their eyes be darkened that they see not; and their back bend down thou always,' etc.[2]—words, surely, not reflecting what Christ desired, but cast in the form of a prophetic optative.[3]

It is any wonder, then, that they do not see things so obvious, if their eyes have been so 'darkened that they see not'? Is it any wonder that they do not look aloft to heavenly things, if their backs are so bowed down that their gaze is always earth-bound? For these physical disabilities indicate, metaphorically, a condition of the understanding.

But I must preserve due proportion. Let this be enough concerning King David's prophecies in the Psalms. I only hope that those of my readers to whom all of this matter has been a twice-told tale may be indulgent, and not complain that their knowledge or personal taste would have led them to introduce texts—perhaps even more cogent—which I have passed by.

1 Ps. 68.22; Matt. 27.34,48.
2 Ps. 68.23,24.
3 . . . *non optando sunt dicta, sed optandi specie prophetando dicta.*

Chapter 20

David, to be sure, ruled in the earthly Jerusalem, but he was a son of the heavenly Jerusalem. Scripture praises him highly because his deep faith and his humble and salutory repentance were even greater than his sins. There can be no question, accordingly, that he is among those of whom he himself said: 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.'[1]

I have already told how he was succeeded during his own lifetime by his son Solomon, king of a still undivided people. Solomon made a good beginning, but a bad ending, because that 'good fortune which wearies the minds of the wise'[2] was of more harm to him than what he gained from his once universally admired and still unforgettable wisdom.

He was also a Prophet as can be seen in his three books which are included in the official canon, namely, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Canticle of Canticles. Two others, the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, which in style somewhat resemble his own, generally have been attributed to him. In the early days, the Western Church, at least, held them to be his. But the critics are convinced that they are not from his pen. In the one called the Wisdom of Solomon there is a clear prophecy of Christ's passion. His wicked murderers are represented as saying: 'Let us therefore lie in wait for the just, because he is not for our turn, and he is contrary to our doings, and upbraideth us with the transgressions of the law, and divulgeth against us the sins of our way of life. He boasteth that he hath the knowledge of God, and calleth himself the son of God. He is become a censurer of our thoughts. He is grievous unto us, even to behold; for his

1 Ps. 31.1.

2 . . . *secundae res sapientium animos fatigant,* cited from Sallust, *Bellum Catilinarium* 11.8.

way of life is not like other men's, and his ways are very different. We are esteemed by him as triflers, and he abstaineth from our ways as from filthiness, and he preferreth the latter end of the just, and glorieth that he hath God for his father. Let us see then if his words be true, and let us prove what shall happen to him, and we shall know what his end shall be. For if he be the true son of God, he will defend him, and will deliver him from the hands of his enemies. Let us examine him by outrages and tortures, that we may know his meekness and try his patience. Let us condemn him to a most shameful death; for there shall be respect had unto him by his words. These things they thought, and were deceived, for their own malice blinded them.'[3]

In Ecclesiasticus, the future faith of the Gentiles is thus foretold: 'Have mercy upon us, O God of all, and behold us, and show us the light of thy mercies; and send thy fear upon the nations, that have not sought after thee, that they may know that there is no God beside thee, and that they may show forth thy wonders. Lift up thy hand over the strange nations, that they may see thy power. For as thou hast been sanctified in us in their sight, so thou shalt be magnified among them in our presence, that they may know thee, as we also have known thee, that there is no God beside thee, O Lord.'[4]

This prophecy cast in the form of a prayerful wish has been fulfilled, as we can see, in Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, it is not very convincing to quote against our Jewish opponents writings which they do not consider canonical. And so I turn to the three books which they do accept as canonical and which are beyond question from Solomon's hand.

They contain passages which are similar, but to show their relevance to Christ and the Church would require too elabo-

3 Wisd. 2.12-21.
4 Eccli. 36.1-5.

rate a discussion to be undertaken here, as it would carry me beyond all proper bounds. However, there is one text in Proverbs so far from being obscure that its relationship to Christ and His possession, the Church, can be grasped without any such trouble. Wicked men are speaking: 'Let us unjustly hide away in the earth the just man, let us swallow him up alive like hell. Let us abolish his memory from the earth, let us lay hands upon his precious possession.'[5] This is very like what the Lord Jesus Himself, in one of the Gospel parables, puts into the mouths of the wicked vinedressers: 'This is the heir; come let us kill him, and we shall have his inheritance.'[6] Further, there is another text from Proverbs which I used before[7] when discussing the barren woman who had borne seven—a text which has always been understood with reference to Christ and the Church by those who know that Christ is the Wisdom of God: 'Wisdom hath built herself a house, and hath supported it with seven pillars. She hath slain her victims, mingled her wine and set forth her table. She hath sent her maids to invite with loud heralding to her wine-cup, saying: Whosoever is a little one, let him come to me. And to the unwise she said: Come, eat my bread, and drink the wine which I have mingled for you.'[8] In these words, surely, we recognize that the Wisdom of God, the Father's co-eternal Word, has built a house for Himself, namely, a Body in the Virgin's womb, and to this Body, as to the Head, He has united the Church as His members, has 'slain' His martyrs as 'victims,' set His 'table' with bread and wine in allusion to the priesthood according to Melchisedech, and called the weak and the unwise, because as St. Paul says: 'The weak things of the world has God chosen to put to shame

5 Prov. 1.11-13.
6 Matt. 21.38.
7 See above, Ch. 4.
8 Prov. 9.1-5.

the strong.'[9] The unwise are told, however, as the text of Proverbs continues: 'Forsake childishness, and live, and seek prudence that you may have life.'

Now, to be made a sharer at the 'table' is to begin to have life, as we see from a text in Ecclesiastes: 'There is no good for a man except what he shall eat and drink.'[10] How can we reasonably interpret these words save as an allusion to partaking at the 'table' which the Mediator of the New Testament, Priest according to the order of Melchisedech, provides with His own Body and Blood? This Sacrifice, indeed, has taken the place of all the sacrifices of the Old Testament which foreshadowed it. This we recognize plainly in Psalm 39, where the Mediator's voice sounds through the Prophet's: 'Sacrifice and oblation thou didst not desire, but thou hast made for me a body.'[11] The offering up of His Body and the administering of It to those who communicate supplant all those ancient sacrifices and oblations.[12]

That the text in Ecclesiastes about eating and drinking—and he comes back to the idea frequently and with hearty approval—is not concerned with the mere pleasures of the table we can see from his other texts: 'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting,' and a little further on: 'The heart of the wise is where there is mourning, and the heart of fools where there is banqueting.'[13]

But the passage from this book which I gladly quote is one touching the two cities and their kings, the Devil and Christ: 'Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a youth, and when the princes eat in the morning. Blessed is the land whose king is the son of freeborn parents, and whose princes eat in due season, in strength and not in confusion.'[14] Here, the Devil

9 1 Cor. 1.27.
10 Eccle. 8.15.
11 Ps. 39.7.
12 . . . *corpus eius offertur et participantibus ministratur.*
13 Eccle. 7.3,5.
14 Eccle. 10.16,17.

is spoken of as a 'youth' because of the foolishness, pride, rashness, unruliness, and other faults usually rampant at that age; and Christ is spoken of as the 'son of freeborn parents' because He descended in the flesh from those holy Patriarchs who were citizens of the free City. The princes of the Devil's city 'eat in the morning,' that is, before the proper time—in the sense that, being overeager to attain perfect happiness at once in the society of this present world, they are unwilling to await the only true happiness which will come in due time in the world to come. But the princes of the City of Christ await in patience the time of a blessedness which is sure to be theirs. The conclusion, 'in strength, and not in confusion,' means that their hope will not cheat them, for it is the hope of which St. Paul says: 'Hope does not confound.'[15] And the psalm says: 'None of them that wait on thee shall be confounded.'[16]

The Canticle of Canticles sings a sort of spiritual rapture experienced by holy souls contemplating the nuptial relationship between Christ the King and His Queen-City, the Church. But it is a rapture velied in allegory to make us yearn for it more ardently and rejoice in the unveiling as the Bridegroom comes into view—the Bridegroom to whom the Canticle sings: 'The righteous love thee'[17] and the hearkening Bride replies: 'There is love in thy delights.'[18]

I am passing over a great deal in silence because of my eagerness to finish this work.

Chapter 21

Of all the kings of the Hebrew people who succeeded Solomon, hardly one can be said to have prophesied, by

15 Rom. 5.5.
16 Ps. 24.3.
17 Cant. 1.4.
18 Cant. 7.6.

either symbolic words or deeds, anything touching Christ and the Church. This goes for the kings both of Juda and of Israel, as the two segments of the people were called after God had punished them with division because of Solomon's sin in the time of his son, Roboam.[1] The ten tribes handed over to Solomon's servant, Jeroboam, when he was appointed king in Samaria were called Israel in a narrower sense, although, of course, the name belonged to the Hebrew people as a whole. The two tribes of Juda and Benjamin were together called Juda because Juda was David's own tribe, and it was for David's sake, lest royal power be lost in his blood line, that this tribe remained attached to the city of Jerusalem. So, too, the tribe of Benjamin remained loyal because Benjamin was the tribe of Saul, who was David's only predecessor on the throne. But, as I said, these two tribes together were called Juda to distinguish them from Israel, the name reserved for the ten tribes who were under their own king.

Because the tribe of Levi was priestly and, on that account, bound to God's service rather than to the king's, it was put down as number thirteen. (It will be remembered that Joseph, one of Israel's twelve sons, founded two tribes, Ephraim and Manasses, while his brothers founded only one apiece.) Even so, the tribe of Levi can be assigned more properly to the kingdom of Jerusalem than to that of Israel because the former possessed God's Temple, to which His service bound them.

When the division of the people had become a fact, the first king in Jerusalem was Roboam, King of Juda, son of Solomon; the first in Samaria—Jeroboam, King of Israel, servant of Solomon. And when Roboam planned to make war on the other part, on the ground that the division was an injustice, God sent word through a Prophet that the division was His doing and that the people must not fight with their

1 3 Kings 12.

brethren. This made it clear that the responsibility for the split lay neither with the people of Israel, nor with their king, but was the result of God's avenging will. When this was realized, both parts calmed down and agreed to make peace, for the division was merely a matter of political regimen, not one of religion.[2]

Chapter 22

For all that, King Jeroboam of Israel, who had proof that God was true, when he got the kingdom God had promised, was so warped in mind as not to believe in Him. Actually, he feared that if he came to God's Temple in Jerusalem (as all Jews without exception were bound by divine ordinance to do for the offering of sacrifices), his subjects might be alienated from his allegiance and reattached to David's blood successors as the royal dynasty.[1] With this in mind, he established idolatry in his own kingdom and, with shocking impiety, tricked God's people into joining him in the worship of idols. Even so, God did not entirely give up sending Prophets to reprimand the king, and his successors who continued his idolatry, and the people themselves. For it was in Israel that there appeared Elias and his disciple, Eliseus, both magnificent Prophets and wonder-workers as well. What is more, when Elias complained: 'They have thrown down thy altars, they have slain thy prophets with the sword, and I alone am left, and they seek my life to take it away,' he received the answer that in Israel God had left 7,000 men who had not bowed the knee to Baal.[2]

2 . . . *non enim religionis, sed regni fuerat facta divisio.*

1 3 Kings 12.26-33.
2 3 Kings 19.10-18.

Chapter 23

In the kingdom of Juda, too, as one king succeeded another, there were Prophets. They came, as God saw fit to send them, to predict what needed prediction, or to rebuke vice and teach virtue. For there, too, although a great deal less frequently than in Israel, there were kings godless enough to offend Him grievously and to be punished for it along with their sinful subjects—although their punishments were not terribly severe. There were in Juda, beyond question, some devout kings, and Holy Writ praises them amply, whereas we are told that the kings of Israel without exception were all, in larger or smaller degree, wicked.

Thus, each of the kingdoms had its own uplifting consolations and depressing adversities as Divine Providence planned or permitted, such as the afflictions of foreign wars as well as of civil wars between the kingdoms, so that there were unmistakable evidences of the mercy or wrath of God in all these ups and downs.

Finally, however, God's indignation reached such a point that the entire race was conquered by the invading Chaldaeans, overthrown in their own domain, and transported, almost to a man, into Assyrian territory. This happened first to the ten tribes called Israel; later, to Juda as well, after Jerusalem and its magnificent Temple had been destroyed. And this paralyzing captivity[1] lasted for seventy years.

When this time was up, they were released and came back to rebuild the ruined Temple. Many Jews went on living in foreign countries, but the division into two kingdoms under separate kings was a thing of the past. Thenceforward, they all had one leader in Jerusalem, whither Jews from everywhere, as best they could manage, used to come for certain calendar festivals in God's temple. Meanwhile, they never

1 . . . *captivum egit otium.*

lacked foreign foes and conquerors. Indeed, when Christ came, He found them paying tribute to Rome.

Chapter 24

When the Jews had returned from Babylonia, they had the Prophets Malachias, Aggeus, and Zacharias, whose predictions belong to this period, and also Esdras. From then on, throughout the entire era extending to the Saviour's coming, there were no others save the following: just before Christ's birth, that other Zacharias, John's father, and his wife Elizabeth; just after Christ's birth, the old man Simeon and the very aged widow Anna. Then came John himself, the very last of all—which explains our Lord's words: 'For all the prophets and the law have prophesied until John.'[1] Because John and Christ were almost of an age, it would be incorrect to say that John foretold Him as someone to be looked for; yet he was inspired to point Him out when He was still unknown.

But the prophesying of these five people is known to us from the Gospels (wherein the Lord's Virgin Mother herself sings like a prophetess before John). Accordingly, the Jews who rejected the faith do not accept their prophecies, but the countless Jews who have believed in the Gospel do. This is the real splitting-in-two of Israel prefigured by that division which the Prophet Samuel foretold to King Saul as irrevocably determined.

However, even the unbelieving Jews have Malachias, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Esdras in their official canon and they consider these to be the last of the Prophets. Fortunately, these men were among that mere handful in the great throng of Prophets whose writings managed to achieve canonical

1 Matt. 11.13.

authority. I realize, therefore, that it will be well for me to quote in this work excerpts from these prophets touching Christ and His Church. But, not wishing to overload this already lengthy Book, I shall, with the Lord's help, do so more easily in the Book to follow.

BOOK EIGHTEEN

Chapter 1

IN CONNECTION with the City of God and the city of the world, I promised to write about their origins, developments and appointed ends as though they were two cities, although, as far as human history goes, the former lives like an alien inside the latter. First, however, I had to refute the arguments of those enemies of the City of God who prefer their own gods to its Founder, Christ, and who hate His followers savagely, to the havoc of their own souls. This I did, with the grace of Christ, in the first ten Books. Only then did I go on to make good the first part of the threefold promise which I have just mentioned. Books XI-XIV dealt with the origins of the two cities; Book XV turned to the simultaneous progress of the two cities and carried the story from Adam to the flood, and the first part of Book XVI continued the story down to the days of Abraham, telling it concurrently, just as in actual history the two currents of development flowed in a single stream.

But in the course of Book XVI there was a change. The second part of this Book dealt with the period from the

Patriarch Abraham to the coming of the kings of Israel and Book XVII continued the narrative down to the Incarnation of the Saviour. Here, however, the progress of the City of God is treated in isolation in my narrative, although, in fact, throughout that period, as from the beginning, the two cities continued to progress concurrently and to give their respective colors to human history. My reason for this change was that, although the course of God's City was overshadowed and kept in the dark, by contrast with the other city, I wanted to bring it into the light during the period which begins with God's more outspoken promises and ends with their fulfillment in Christ's birth of the Virgin.

Now, however, I must retrace my steps and describe in some detail the development of the city of the world from the days of Abraham on. In this way, my readers will be able to study the two cities by comparing one with the other.

Chapter 2

The city of man, for all the width of its expansion throughout the world and for all the depth of its differences in this place and that, is a single community. The simple truth is that the bond of a common nature makes all human beings one. Nevertheless, each individual in this community is driven by his passions to pursue his private purposes. Unfortunately, the objects of these purposes are such that no one person (let alone, the world community) can ever be wholly satisfied. The reason for this is that nothing but Absolute Being can satisfy human nature.[1] The result is that the city of man remains in a chronic condition of civil war. Hence, there is always the oppression of those who fail by those who succeed.

1 . . . *id quod appetitur aut nemini aut non omnibus sufficit, quia non est id ipsum.*

The vanquished succumb to the victorious, preferring sheer survival and any kind of peaceful settlement to their own continued hegemony—even to liberty itself. In nearly all peoples the voice of nature itself has counseled that, when you have had the bad luck to be beaten, it is better to bow before the conquerer than to risk wholesale annihilation—so much so, in fact, that those who have chosen death rather than slavery have aroused constant admiration in those who do not understand. At any rate, God, in whose mighty providence lie both defeat and victory, has seen to it that wars brought supremacy to some people and subjugation to others.

Among the many earthly empires into which human society (which I call inclusively the city of this world) has been split for the sake of earthly advantage or greed, two have emerged in history far surpassing all the rest: first, the Assyrian, then the Roman, chronologically successive and geographically distinct; the former in the East, the latter in the West; the latter taking up, without interval, where the former left off. In comparison with these two, I would call all other kingdoms with their kings mere appendages.[2]

Now, Assyria already had its second king, Ninus, succeeding his father Belus, when Abraham was born in Chaldaea.[3] At that time there also existed the very small kingdom of the Sicyonians.[4] It is this kingdom which the encyclopedic scholar Marcus Varro[5] takes as his earliest point of departure in his *Origins of the Roman People.* From the Sicyonian kings he proceeds to the Athenians, thence to the Latins, finally to the Romans. Actually, however, up to the founding of Rome, it all makes extremely small talk by comparison with Assyrian achievements. Still, the Roman historian Sallust admits that the Athenians were outstanding in Greece—more,

2 *Regna cetera ceterosque reges velut adpendices istorum dixerim.*
3 Cf. above, 16.17.
4 . . . *regnum Sicyoniorum admodum parvum.*
5 . . . *ille undecumque doctissimus Marcus Varro.* Cf. above, 6.2.

however, by reputation than in reality. He has this to say: 'In my opinion, Athenian exploits were quite large and impressive in scope—rather less so, however, than we have been led to believe. The world is convinced that their doings were of first-rate importance because of the brilliant account of them which Athenian historians have given. So it is that the powers of her active men have been judged in the light of the enthusiastic praise her brilliant writers accorded.'[6] Additional great glory came to this city from the literature and philosophy which flourished there.

When it comes to power, however, there was nothing in antiquity to compare with that of Assyria in scope and duration. King Ninus, Belus' son, we are told, conquered all Asia right up to the Libyan frontier—one third of the world in number of subjects, one half of the earth in extent. In the East only India escaped his sway; even so, his widow, Semiramis, attacked these people. So it came about that all the peoples and kings of those lands were brought under Assyria's imperial domination and obediently did as they were told. I have already said that Abraham was born into this empire, in Chaldaea, in Ninus' day.

It happens that Greek history is much more familiar to our people than Assyrian history (because of the Latin historians who have dug out the ancient genealogical roots of the Romans, in passing from the Greeks to the Latins to the Romans, who are Latins). Hence, when necessary, I must introduce the Assyrian kings, in order to bring out how Babylon, the first Rome, so to speak, was related in development to the wayfaring City of God. In general, however, in selecting facts to illustrate the contrast between the earthly and heavenly cities, I shall, in this work, take the bulk of my material from Greek and Roman history. Here, Rome plays the role of a second Babylon.

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6 *Bellum Catilinarium* 8.

At Abraham's birth, then, Ninus was second king of Assyria, Europs, second of Sicyon. (Belus had been the first in Assyria, Aegialeus first in Sicyon.) By the time, however, that Abraham left Babylonia on God's promise that he would be the father of a great people and that in his seed all nations were to be blessed, Assyria had its fourth king and Sicyon its fifth. In the former, Ninus' son was ruling, in succession to his mother, Semiramis. History has it that he put her to death because she had shamelessly sought to lie with him in incest. Some writers think that she founded Babylon, and she may very well have built it over. I have already indicated, in Book XVI,[7] the time and circumstances of its founding.

With respect to this king's name, some call him Ninus, too; others, Ninyas by patronymic derivation. Anyway, his contemporary in Sicyon was Telxion, under whose sway times were so pleasant and properous that, when he died, his people worshiped him with sacrifices as a god. They also instituted games in his honor—the first instance, history says, of this kind of thing.

Chapter 3

In the days of Telxion, Isaac was born of his hundred-year-old father, Abraham, to his wife, Sara. This was by God's promise, for Sara was old and barren and had given up hope of having a child. At this time, Arelius was the fifth king of the Assyrians. When Isaac himself was sixty, his wife bore him the twins, Esau and Jacob. Abraham, the twins' grandfather, was still living, in his 160th year, but he died fifteen years later during the reign in Assyria of Xerxes the Elder, sometimes called Baleus, and in Sicyon of Thuriacus (spelled Thurimachus by some), each the seventh king of their respective peoples.

7 Ch. 4.

The kingdom of the Greeks, under the first king, Inachus, came into being at the time Abraham's grandsons were born. Varro, by the way, does not neglect to tell us that the Sicyonia also offered sacrifice at the tomb of their seventh king, Thuriacus. Aramiter was eighth king of the Assyrians, Leucippus eighth of the Sicyonians, Inachus first of the Greeks, when God spoke to Isaac and made to him afresh the same two promises made to his father before him, namely, that his seed would possess Chanaan, and in him all nations would be blessed. Later on, these identical promises were repeated to Isaac's son, Abraham's grandson, first called Jacob and afterwards Israel. At this point Belacus was the ninth of the Assyrians, Inachus' son Phoroneus the second of the Greeks, while Leucippus still reigned over the Sicyonians.

It was at this epoch that Greece, under King Phoroneus, became renowned for certain advances in law and the administration of justice. Phegous, the younger brother of Phoroneus, was, after his death, worshiped as a god. A temple was built near his tomb and he received sacrifices of oxen. I believe he was thought worthy of such honor because in his part of the kingdom (his father had divided it between the two brothers so that both might reign during his lifetime) he had built shrines for the worship of the gods. He had, moreover, taught the people how to divide time into months and years and how to measure and count them. At any rate, the primitive men of his day marveled at his inventions and, when he died, thought that he had become a god, or at least wanted to make him one.

Inachus' daughter, Io, so we are told, was later called Isis and adored as a great goddess in Egypt. Other writers, however, have it that she came from Ethiopia into Egypt as queen, and there governed extensively and justly, teaching many useful arts including that of writing. They go on to say that, after her death there, divine honors were accorded her—so

much so, that any man was judged guilty of death who should claim that she had been human.

Chapter 4

When Baleus was the tenth king of the Assyrians, Mesappus was the ninth of the Sicyonians. (He is called Cephisos by some writers, and may have had two names, but, more likely, one man has been confused with another). At the same time, Apis was the third king of the Greeks and Isaac died at the age of 180, leaving behind him his twins who were themselves already 120 years old. The second-born of these, Jacob, belonged to that City of God which is the theme of this work, but his brother was reprobate. Jacob had twelve sons, one of whom was named Joseph. This Joseph was sold by his brothers, during the lifetime of their grandfather Isaac, to a group of merchants passing by, on their way to Egypt.

There, when Joseph was thirty years old, he was raised from the condition of a slave to be a high official in the court of the Pharao. This great honor came to him because, with God's help, he had interpreted the dreams of the king, and had foretold seven years of plenty to be followed by seven lean years that would eat up the overwhelming abundance of the first seven. The king freed him from prison and placed him in charge over Egypt. It had been his perfect chastity that caused him to be cast into prison in the first place, for he had heroically resisted the solicitations of his lord's wife, and refused to commit adultery. But she lied about the incident to her gullible lord, to whom she could show the garment which she snatched from Joseph as he fled from her presence.

In the second of the seven barren years, Jacob with all his family came into Egypt to his son. He was then in his 130th year, as he said when the king asked him. Joseph was in his

thirty-ninth. He had been in his thirtieth when the king honored him, and had now lived through the additional seven years of abundance and two of the lean years.

Chapter 5

It was during this same time that Apis, king of the Greeks, sailed over to Egypt, died there, and became the greatest of all their gods under the name of Serapis. Varro gives a very plausible explanation of this posthumous change in his name. The coffin or sarcophagus in which a dead man is laid away is called *soròs,* in Greek. Well, before they built Apis a temple, the Egyptians had already begun to worship him in his coffin. Soros, the box, and Apis, the man, became Sorapis, and in the end, by the change of one letter, as often happens, Serapis. They also made a law concerning him, that anyone who presumed to speak of him as human should pay for this impiety with his life. Accordingly, in most of the temples where Isis and Serapis were worshiped, there was also a graven image, its lips sealed with a warning finger, calling for silence. This meant, in Varro's opinion, that there was to be no talk about those gods having been human beings.

Moreover, Egypt, in delusion and with fantastic foolishness, consecrated an ox in Apis' honor, and reared the beast in the lap of luxury.[1] But they called it Apis, and not Serapis, because it was alive and adored outside a coffin. When this beast died, they sought and found another of the same color, a calf with identical white markings, and then believed that it had been miraculously furnished them by heaven. It was, of course, no great task for the demons, intent upon hoodwinking them, to flash out the imaginary likeness of a similarly spotted bull for a cow to see in the act of coition or during pregnancy, so

1 . . . *deliciis affluentibus alebat.*

that the lusting of the cow after the image would bring about its likeness in her calf. This was what Jacob did with the green and white sticks when he wanted to get lambs and kids of different colors.[2] Surely, what men can do to animals in the act of coition with real objects and real colors, the demons can very easily do with make-believe.

Chapter 6

When Apis (who was king of the Greeks and not of the Egyptians) died in Egypt, he was succeeded by his son Argus, out of whose name the people came first to be called Argi and, subsequently, Argivi. Under the earlier kings, this name was not applied either to a place or people. While this king was ruler of the Greeks, and Eratus of the Sicyonians, and Baleus of the Assyrians, Jacob died in Egypt at the age of 147. Before he died, he blessed his sons and his grandsons, who were sons of Joseph, and made an unmistakable prophecy of Christ when he blessed Juda and said: 'A prince shall not fail to come out of Juda, nor a ruler from his thighs, until those things that are in store for him come true; and he shall be the awaited of the nations.'[1]

During Argus' reign, Greece began to cultivate her land resources and to import seeds from elsewhere for agricultural purposes. Argus, too, after his death, was made a god and honored with a temple and sacrifices. But he was not the first to merit such distinction; a private citizen, a fellow called Homogyrus who had been killed by lightning, was divinized before him while he was yet reigning, because he was the first man to yoke oxen for plowing.

2 Gen. 30.37-39.

1 Gen. 49.10.

Chapter 7

While Mamitus was twelfth king of Assyria, Plemnaeus eleventh of Sicyon, and Argus king of Greece, Joseph died in Egypt at the age of 110. After his death, God's people increased wonderfully and stayed on in Egypt for 145 years. They were undisturbed there so long as men were alive who were friends of Joseph; afterwards, however, their prosperity and growth became the object of envy and suspicion. Then, until they were freed, they were subjected to the insufferable burdens of persecution and slavery. Yet all along they continued to multiply, as God gave the increase. In Assyria and Greece throughout this era the same dynasties endured.

Chapter 8

Moses was born in Egypt during the reigns of Saphrus, fourteenth king of Assyria, Orthopolis, twelfth king of Sicyon, and Criasus, fifth king of Greece. Through Moses, God's people were delivered from that bondage of Egypt which was necessary to arouse in them a desire for God's help. Prometheus, too, some say, lived during the reigns of the kings just mentioned. The word got around that 'he made men out of mud'—because he was considered a most excellent teacher of wisdom. However, we have no evidence of who the wise men of his day were. His brother, Atlas, had a reputation as a great astrologer, which accounts for the myth that he carries the sky on his shoulders. There is a mountain named after him, and the height of it may well have given people the idea of Atlas supporting the sky.

Meanwhile, many other fabulous ideas began to be dreamed up in Greece, and from this time up to the reign of Cecrops, king of the Athenians, under whom the city first came to be

called Athens—this was the period of the exodus from Egypt under Moses—additional dead people were divinized by the blind, foolish, and superstitious customs of the Greeks. Among others, there were Melantomice, wife of King Criasus, and Phorbas, their son, who became sixth king of Greece after his father, and Jasus, son of the seventh king, Triophas, and Sthenelas, the ninth king. (I find this name spelt as Stheneleus or Sthenelus, in different authors.)

They say, too, that these were the days of Mercury, a grandson of Atlas by his daughter, Maia—a hero even of the popular story-tellers.[1] He was renowned for his skill in many arts which he taught to men. Hence, when he died, men belived he was a god, or, at least, were willing to make him one. Later on came Hercules, still, however, in the era of the Argives. Some authors place him earlier than Mercury, but I think they are mistaken. Be this as it may, responsible historians of antiquity agree that both were human and won divine honors because they had helped mankind to make life more livable.

Minerva, of course, is much earlier than either of these. For it was in the time of Ogygus that she is supposed to have first appeared as a young girl by the shores of Lake Triton—hence her name, Tritonia. Beyond doubt she was the moving spirit behind many fine discoveries, and was all the more readily taken for a goddess because her origin was so obscure. The songs about her having sprung from Jupiter's head are, of course, subject matter for poetry and story-telling, not for history.

Historians do not agree on the dates of Ogygus himself. There was a great flood in his day, greater than the one that came later in Deucalion's time; but not, assuredly, the tremendous flood from which only those in the ark escaped, for neither Greek nor Latin historians knew anything about

1 . . . *quod vulgatiores etiam litterae personant.*

that. Anyway, in the book I mentioned above, Varro begins with this flood as the point of departure in dealing with Roman history. On the other hand, our Christian chroniclers, Jerome and Eusebius before him, following still older writers, have placed the flood of Ogygus more than 300 years later, during the reign of Phoroneus, second king of the Greeks.

However that may be, Minerva was already adored as a goddess when Cecrops became king of Athens. Some writers claim that the city of Athens was founded under this king; others that is was merely rebuilt.

Chapter 9

The name Athens is certainly derived from *Athēna* which is Greek for Minerva. Varro gives the following explanation of this. It seems that an olive tree suddenly appeared where there was none before, and, in another spot, a gushing stream of water. These phenomena made a mighty impression upon the king, who forthwith dispatched men to Apollo at Delphi to inquire what was to be made of them, and what course of action was to be taken. The oracle replied that the olive tree stood for Minerva, the water for Neptune; further, that it lay in the citizen's power to pick either of the names of the two gods, whose portents these were, as a name for their city. When Cecrops received this answer, he called together all citizens of either sex for a vote. It was a custom there, in those days, to include women in public assemblies. When the throng had been polled, it was found that the men stood for Neptune, the women for Minerva. There was a majority of one woman, and Minerva won. Thereupon, Neptune was so enraged that he sent the ocean boiling in over Athenian land—for demons can use any kind of water to cause a flood. Varro goes on to say that the men of Athens, to placate him, decreed a three-

fold punishment for their womenfolk: they were to lose the right of suffrage; they were not to give their own names to their children; they were never to be known as Athenians.

That is how the noblest and most brilliant city Greece ever had, the mother and nurse of liberal studies and of so many great philosophers, got its name! As the demons made sport of this tusssle between two of their gods, a male and a female, and of the female's victory by female vote, Athens was driven to penalize the victory of the victorious goddess to placate the vindictive god who was vanquished[1]—quaking more violently, it seems, before Neptune's waves than before Minerva's weapons. Minerva the victor was herself vanquished in the punishment of her women supporters.

Nor did she come to the assistance of her partisans. They were not even permitted to use the title Athenian, to bear the name of the goddess who triumphed by their votes over the male god. And they lost their suffrage and the right to give their names to their own children! How many reflections one is tempted to make! But I must hasten on to other matters.

Chapter 10

Marcus Varro, of course, refuses to believe these uncomplimentary mythical fictions, on the ground that they are unbecoming the majesty and dignity of gods. So, too, he rejects the following story about the Areopagus—the place where St. Paul debated the Athenians and whence their officials get the title Areopagites. The story is that Mars (in Greek, *Arēs*) was accused of murder and was here summoned to judgment before a dozen of his divine peers. He was acquitted by six votes, since, when votes were equally divided, the custom was to render a verdict of innocent.

1 . . . *a victo laesa ipsam victricis victoriam punire compulsa est.*

Against this generally accepted explanation Varro tries to build up a more elaborate one from little-known sources—anything, in short, that leaves him free to deny that the Athenians named the Areopagus from *Arēs* (Mars) and *pâgos* (town), Marstown, so to speak. Varro will not have this explanaton because it is unflattering to those divine beings whom he believes to be quite above and beyond quarrels and court proceedings. He goes on to say that this story of Mars is just as untrue as is the story about the three goddesses, Juno, Minerva, and Venus, who competed in a beauty contest, with Paris for judge, to win a golden apple. Yet, the gods themselves appear to be highly pleased with their own crimes, real or imaginary, and it is to ease their wrath that men stage them with music and dancing to applauding throngs.

Varro does not believe these stories because he finds them wholly out of harmony with the divine nature and decorum. Yet, when he accounts for the historical—not mythical—derivation of Athens' name, he tells the whole business of Minerva and Neptune squabbling over the name; how, when they were competing with a show of miracles, even Apollo did not dare to judge between them, though his aid was asked; how the latter appealed to human beings to settle the divine brawl, just as Jupiter did in the case of the three goddesses; how Minerva won the election only to be beaten in the penalty imposed on her voters; how she imposed the name Athens on the men who were against her, yet failed to win the name of Athenians for the women who were for her.

In these times, during the reign at Athens of Cranaus, successor to Cecrops, Varro places the flood of Deucalion, so called because he was king in those parts where the flood was worst; but our Christian historians, Eusebius and Jerome, place it in the preceding reign. Anyway, this flood did not reach Egypt or the country thereabout.

Chapter 11

Moses led God's people out of Egypt in the last days of Cecrops, king of Athens. At this time Ascatades was king of Assyria, Marathus of Sicyon, and Triophas of the Greeks. When he had led them forth, he delivered to them the Law which he received from God on Mount Sinai, the Law which is called the Old Testament because it contains earthly promises and precedes the New Testament which would promise the kingdom of heaven through Jesus Christ—sequence which was as proper in time as it is proper in each soul that advances in the life of God. For St. Paul says: 'That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards, the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthly; the second man, from heaven, heavenly.'[1]

Moses ruled the people for forty years in the desert and died at the age of 120. He, too, was a prophet of Christ in so far as Christ was prefigured in the rites and ceremonies, in the tabernacle, in the priesthood and sacrifices, and in other symbolic precepts.

He was succeeded by Josue, who conducted the people into the promised land and established them there, once he had, by God's authority, driven out the previous Gentile inhabitants. This man governed the people twenty-seven years after Moses' death. He himself died while Amynta was eighteenth king of the Assyrians, Corax sixteenth of the Sicyonians, Erichthonius fourth of the Athenians.

Chapter 12

In this era, from the exodus out of Egypt to the death of Josue, the Greek kings proceeded to set up in honor of the

1 1 Cor. 15.46,47.

false gods solemn religious rites which ceremonially evoked the memory of the flood, man's harassed existence in those days as he trekked back and forth between the mountains and the plains, and his liberation at last. For they say the Luperci's ascent and descent of the Via Sacra symbolized mankind climbing to mountain tops before the onrushing waters, and going down again to the valleys as the waters subsided.

In those days, too, we are told, Dionysius, also called Father Bacchus, and adored as a god after his demise, first showed the grapevine to a guest of his in Attica. At the same time, games with music were inaugurated in honor of the Delphic Apollo, whose anger, men thought, had made Greek fields barren because the Greeks had not defended his temple when King Danaus' invading army had set it on fire. At least, they received oracular notice from Apollo to establish the games.

In Attica, King Ericthonius was the first to start the games. He did the same for Minerva, too, except that the victor's prize in her games was some olive oil, because she was held to be the discoverer of this oil, as Bacchus was of wine.

Around this time, it is said, Europa was carried off by Xanthus, king of Crete (whose name is given differently in some authors), and begot Rhadamanthus, Sarpedon, and Minos—although it is more commonly said that these men were sons of Jupiter by Europa. The votaries of these gods take for true history the story about the king of Crete, while the story about Jupiter which poets sing, and theatres applaud, and simple people retell is regarded as a myth invented as an excuse for more of those plays in which the gods are placated by a show of crimes they never committed!

In those days a Hercules became famous in Syria—not the one I spoke of earlier. (The inside story[1] is that there was more than one Hercules and more than one Father Bacchus.)

1 *Secretiore quippe historia. . .*

At any rate, this particular Hercules, so we are told, was famous for a dozen exploits (not including the murder of Antaeus the African which belongs to a different Hercules), and then burned himself to death on Mount Oeta, because the bravery which made him so often a victor failed to sustain him in sickness.

In those days, too, the king (or better, tyrant), Busiris, used to offer to his gods the bloody sacrifice of his own guests. He is said to have been born of Neptune and Libya, the daughter of Epaphus. (I suppose we are not to believe that Neptune actually committed adultery. That would be to impute such things to gods! But it makes a fine theme for poets and playwrights whose business it is thus to placate them.[2])

Vulcan and Minerva, we are told, were the parents of King Ericthonius of Athens, in whose closing days Josue died. But, to keep Minerva a virgin, they pretend that while she was resisting Vulcan he was roused to passion and spilled seed on the ground and thus a man was born who was given the name Ericthonius, from *éris* (Greek for 'struggle') and *chthōn* (Greek for 'ground').

I must confess that the better educated pagans reject such stories about their gods. They explain this particular fancy in this way. In an Athenian temple, common to Vulcan and Minerva, a foundling boy was discovered with an snake coiled around him—a sign that he was destined to be a very great man. The parents were unknown, and so, because the temple was common to Vulcan and Minerva, the boy was called their child. Still, the myth explains his name far better than the 'true story' does.

What difference does it make? Suppose the latter kind of thing is what devout pagans learn from history books, while the former is merely what delights impure demons in un-

2 In this connection, cf. above, 2.8; 4.26.

truthful plays, those devout pagans nevertheless do worship these impure demons as gods. And, however much they may protest, they cannot wholly clear their gods of crime if they have to stage for them, on demand, shows in which they basely depict the very stories they so loftily deny.[3] For, so long as the gods are so greatly appeased by these false and filthy goings-on, even if the burden of the legendary song is a divine sin which never happened, it is still a real sin for the gods to be delighted with it.[4]

Chapter 13

After the death of Josue, God's people were ruled by judges. It was a period during which the pendulum of their life swung between trial and tribulation, because of their sins, and security and solace through the mercy of God.[1]

In the same period, such myths were imagined as these: Triptolemus, under orders from Ceres, was carried aloft by winged serpents to shower grain on needy lands; the bestial Minotaur was shut up in a labyrinth from which no man who entered could ever come out by reason of its inextricable mazes;[2] the Centaurs had natures compounded of horse and man; Cerberus was a three-headed dog of the underworld; Phryxus and his sister Hel flew in the air on the back of a ram; Gorgon, whose locks were composed of snakes, turned onlookers into stone; Bellerophon flew on a winged horse called Pegasus; Amphion charmed the very stones and drew them after him by the sweetness of his lyre; Daedalus the

3 . . . *ubi turpiter aguntur, quae velut sapienter negantur.*
4 . . . *etsi fabula cantat crimen numinum falsum, delectari tamen falso crimine crimen est verum.*

1 . . . *alternaverunt . . . humilitates laborum pro eorum peccatis et prosperitates consolationum propter miserationem Dei.*
2 Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.27, *inextricabilis error.*

carpenter and his son Icarus made themselves wings and took to the air; Oedipus solved the unanswerable riddle that the sphinx, a four-footed freak with human face, used to propose, and drove her to headlong suicide; Antaeus, whom Hercules slew, was a son of the earth because every time he fell down he got up stronger than before. And there were still others which I pass over.

These fables, dating back before the Trojan War (at which point Marcus Varro concludes the second book of his *Origins of the Roman People*), were so fashioned by men's fancies out of the facts of history that no shame was shed on the gods. On the other hand, the men who made up the story about Jupiter's rape of the handsome boy Ganymede (actually committed by King Tantalus but mythically ascribed to Jupiter), or the one about his seduction of Danae by showering gold into her lap (meaning that he sullied her purity for a price), and the others that are fact or fiction or were actuated by men and attributed to Jupiter[3]—these men had an unspeakably low opinion of the human heart if they expected others to put up with such lies patiently. The fact is, however, that men embraced them gladly, and were less angry with the story-tellers than afraid of the anger of the gods, if they failed to stage such stuff in their honor. Whereas, men who have had any genuine devotion to Jupiter ought to have punished severely anyone daring to say such things about him.

In those days, too, Latona gave birth to Apollo—not the one whose oracles I mentioned above, but the Apollo who, along with Hercules, is supposed to have served King Admetus. He, too, was taken for a god, so that nearly everyone thinks the two Apollos are really one and the same.

And it was then that Father Bacchus went to war in India and had many women in his army, called Bacchae, who were more renowned for fury than fighting. Some writers say that

3 . . . *vel facta vel ficta sunt, aut facta ab aliis et ficta de Iove.*

he was beaten and bound with chains; others, that he was killed by Perseus in a fight, and they go on to tell us where he is buried. Despite all this, and as though Bacchus were a god, the dirty demons have managed to get established in his honor those so-called sacred, but really sacrilegious, Bacchanalian rites, the outrageous filthiness of which made the Roman Senate so painfully embarrassed that, after a number of years, the rites were forbidden in Rome.

During those days, too, Perseus and his wife Andromeda died and were believed to have taken their abode in heaven. Then, neither fear nor shame kept men from adorning their likenesses with stars and giving their names to two of the constellations in the sky.

Chapter 14

In the same period there lived certain poets who were called 'theological.' They sang songs about those so-called gods who were merely men, however great; or, at most, just parts of the cosmos which the true God made; or, beings ranged, according to God's will and their own deserts, as principalities and powers. Take Orpheus, Musaeus, and Linus for examples. If these poets wrote anything, amidst a flood of foolishness and falsehood, touching the one true God, they merely adored Him along with the other gods and gave to all indiscriminately the reverence which belongs to Him alone. Thus, assuredly, they did not give Him worthy service. Moreover, they were no more able than the rest to keep their hands off the unseemly mythical nonsense that dishonors their own gods. But at least these 'theological' poets worshiped the gods without being worshiped as gods. Orpheus is an exception for, somehow or other, the city of the ungodly has given him the job of overseeing the sacred or, rather, sacrilegious rites of the underworld.

To continue: the wife of king Athamas, called Ino, and her son Melicertes, drowned themselves in the sea, only to have men rank them with the gods, as they ranked other contemporaries, for instance, Castor and Pollux. The mother of this Melicertes, too, is held as a goddess by both Greeks and Latins. The former called her Leucothea; the latter, Mututa.

Chapter 15

During this epoch, the kingdom of Argos came to an end and Mycenae, Agamemnon's home, became the new seat of power. There arose, too, the kingdom of Laurentum, with Saturn's son, Picus, for first king. This was at the time when Deborah was judge in Israel. Actually, God's spirit ruled through her, for she was prophetess as well as judge, but her prophecy is so obscure that it would take too long to prove she was speaking of Christ. The Laurentines, who were in power in Italy, were, next to the Greeks, very probably the forebears of the Romans. The Assyrian kingdom still endured. Its twenty-third king, Lampares, was contemporary with Picus' rise to power.

I must leave it to the votaries of the gods to make up their minds about Picus' father, Saturn. Some refuse to believe that he was a human being; but others have it in writing that he preceded his son on the throne in Italy. Here, for instance, is a well-known passage out of Virgil:

> He tamed and unified those mountaineers
> And gave them laws and Latium for a name
> (For he had lain there safe from foes and fears),
> And with his reign the Golden Ages came.[1]

1 *Aeneid* 8.321-325. Virgil plays on the words *Latium* and *latuisset* (from *latere,* 'to lie hid').

They may say, of course, that this is just a piece of poetic invention and that, actually, Sterces was Picus' father. This Sterces, by the way, was a highly knowledgeable farmer who first hit upon the idea of enriching farm lands with dung (in Latin, *stercus,* a word derived from Stirces or Stercutius, as some call him). Whatever makes them want to call him Saturn, this fellow Stercutius was certainly made a god because of his skill in farming. Picus his son, too, has been numbered among the gods. They claim that he was famous both as a soothsayer and a warrior. His son Faunus, second king of the Laurentines, likewise is one of their gods, or was. They accorded divine honors to all these dead men before the coming of the Trojan War.

Chapter 16

When Troy fell, its ruin was so resounding that the poets' endless chanting of it has made it familiar to every schoolboy.[1] The event was tremendous in itself, but is still better known and talked of because of the superb literature it inspired. With that fall, the name of the kingdom of Laurentum came to an end, for at this point the king was Faunus' son, Latinus, and it was from his name that it began to be called the kingdom of the Latins. Meanwhile, the Greek conquerors, leaving Troy in ashes, and heading back home, were crushed and cut to pieces in a series of spine-chilling disasters. But they turned some of these catastrophes into occasions for lengthening the list of their gods.

Take the case of Diomedes. By a divine punishment, it is said, he was unable ever to get back home, and his companions were transformed into birds. And this, they say, is no mythical or poetical fabrication, but a matter of history. Yet,

1 . . . *excidio illo usquequaque cantato puerisque notissimo.*

though they made him a god, he was powerless to reconvert his old companions back into men or even, as a newcomer in heaven,[2] to wheedle this favor out of Jupiter, his king.

They go on to tell that he has a temple on the island of Diomedea, near Mount Garganus in Apulia, and that the birds (his one-time friends) fly around and nest in this temple and even perform the astonishing religious ritual of sprinkling it with water. If Greeks, or people of Greek stock, come thither, the birds become tame and even fawn on the pilgrims. If, on the other hand, any foreigners appear, the birds swoop down upon their hapless heads, tearing at them and wounding them to death. For they are reputed to be equipped with beaks big enough and hard enough for such onslaughts.

Chapter 17

To support the story just recounted, Varro cites still others no whit less unbelievable, for example, how Circe, the most famous of all witches, turned Ulysses' shipmates into beasts; how the Arcades were picked by lot to swim across a certain lake, were there transformed into wolves, and went on living with wolf packs in the wastelands of that region—but, when they abstained from human flesh for a period of nine years, they could swim back across the lake and be reshaped into men. Finally, Varro makes particular mention of a man called Demaenetus, who was changed into a wolf because he had sampled the flesh of a little boy whom the Arcades were sacrificing to their god Lycaeus, but in the tenth year got back his own shape, became a boxer, and won the championship in the Olympic games. Varro thinks that this transformation of men into wolves accounts for the epithet Lycaeus, given to both Pan and Jupiter in Arcadia—for the

2 . . . *tanquam coelicola novicius.*

people felt that these metamorphoses were operations of divine power. Lycaeus is derived from *lykos,* which is Greek for wolf. Varro goes on to say that the Roman Luperci grew out of the seed, so to speak, of these Arcadian mysteries.

Chapter 18

And now my readers are perhaps wondering what I have to say about demonic trickery on so huge a scale? What can I say except: 'Come forth out of Babylon.'[1] If we take the command of the Prophet in a spiritual sense, it means that we should fly from the city of this world, from the fellowship of wicked angels and wicked men, with the feet of that faith which works through love, and should press onward unceasingly toward the living God. Indeed, the greater evidence we see of demonic power over these depths on earth, the more inseparably should we cling to the Mediator by whose power alone we can rise from the deepest depth to the heights of heaven.

Meanwhile, if I say that such stories are not to be credited, there are men living today who will solemnly depose that they have heard such things from unimpeachable sources or even know the 'facts' at first hand. When I myself was in Italy, I used to hear such tales in connection with a certain district where the women innkeepers were imbued with magic arts and would give to such wayfarers as they could ensnare a kind of cheese concealing something that at once changed them into beasts of burden. Only when they transported whatever the landladies needed would they come to themselves. Meanwhile, I was told, they were not mentally reduced to the level of beasts, but continued in full possession of their human rationality, as was the case real or imagined

1 Isa. 48.20.

of Apuleius, who in *The Golden Ass* tells how he drank poison and was turned into an ass, preserving throughout this experience his rational powers.

Now, such phenomena are either too unfounded in fact or too far beyond general experience to deserve belief. Nevertheless, what must be unshakably believed is that Almighty God, whether to bless or to punish, can do whatsoever He wills; further, that demons have no powers by nature—angelic by creation and malignant only by corruption—except what He allows, whose judgments are often hidden but never unholy.[2] Certainly, demons cannot create substances. The most they can do—if they do any of the things we are discussing—is to make, in appearance only, one of the creatures of the true God look like something different. Hence, on no account would I believe that demonic art or power can really change a man's body—much less his mind—into the body and shape of any beast.

It may be, however, that the imagination[3] of a man (which, even as he thinks or dreams, covers a countless variety of things and, although incorporeal, takes hold with astounding swiftness on quasi-corporeal semblances) may, when the man's external senses are dulled by sleep or artificially overwhelmed, be presented, inexplicably, in corporeal form to the external senses of another person. In this theory the body of a man may lie asleep in one place, living, of course, but with his senses even more heavily and strongly chained than in sleep, while his imagination may appear to the external apprehension of somebody else as if embodied in the likeness of some animal. Indeed, the man himself may seem to himself to be such an animal, just as he would in a dream—bearing burdens, for example. Of course, if such burdens are real, they must be carried by demons. In this

2 . . . *cuius iudicia occulta sunt multa, iniusta nulla.*
3 . . . *phantasticum hominis.*

way onlooking men are deluded—they see, on the one hand, real burdens; on the other, only imaginary beasts of burden.

This seems to be the explanation of what a man named Praestantius recounted to me as having befallen his father. The father ate some of the poisoned cheese in question in his own home; then lay, as if asleep in his own bed, but beyond all rousing. After some days, Praestantius said, his father came to, as though awaking from sleep, and began to tell what he had experienced, as though he had been dreaming; how he had become a pack-horse and, along with other pack-horses, had transported the Rhetian military provisions, so called because they are carried into Rhetia. What he described in connection with the transport had, in fact, taken place, but to the old man there seemed to be nothing but his dreams.

Another man told me this story. One night when he was at home, before he went to bed, he saw approaching him a certain philosopher whom he knew intimately. The visitor proceeded to explain to him certain aspects of Platonism which he had refused to explain when he had been begged to do so earlier. And when the philosopher in question was asked why he had done in his friend's house what he had declined to do in his own, he replied: 'I did nothing of the sort, but I dreamed that I did.' Which means that the man awake saw in imaginative semblance what the sleeping man was seeing in his dream.

These stories came to me, not from such yarn-spinners as I would consider beneath believing, but from such men as I would judge quite above lying to me. Hence, with respect to what is said or written about men being changed into wolves by the gods or, rather, demons in Arcadia, and about 'Circe, with songs, transforming Ulysses' companions,'[4] I think that, if these things happened at all, they happened

4 Virgil, *Eclogue* 8.70.

in the fashion I have just described. As for Diomedes' birds, which, we are told, go on propagating their kind, I refuse to believe that they were metamorphosed men—they were merely substituted for men who disappeared, as a doe was put in place of Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter. The girl was later on found alive, so it is easy to see that her place had been taken by the doe. No, with God's righteous permission, these examples of sleight-of-hand could not have been difficult for the demons. Diomedes' companions, when they failed to show up and later could nowhere be found—avenging bad angels had done away with them—were believed to have been changed into those birds. The birds must, of course, have been secretly imported from another region where they originate and, in the twinkling of an eye, substituted for the missing men.

As for their performing lustral operations upon Diomedes' temple with beaks full of water, fawning upon men of Greek stock, and belaboring foreigners—there is nothing there to occasion amazement. The demons may well have driven them to this, for the all-important thing for the demons is to hoodwink men into believing that Diomedes became a god, and so make men worship false gods, to the dishonor of the true God. Demons desire that men should serve dead men (who even when alive did not truly live) with temples, altars, sacrifices, and priesthood, all of which, when righteously employed, are due solely to the one, true, living God.

Chapter 19

After Troy had been taken and destroyed, Aeneas arrived in Italy with twenty shiploads of Trojan survivors. At this point Latinus was king there, while Menestheus was king of the Athenians, Polyphis of the Sicyonians, Tautanis of the

Assyrians. Among the Hebrews, Labdon was judge. After Latinus' death, Aeneas ruled for three years, during which period the rulers mentioned continued with two exceptions: Pelasgus became king of the Sicyonians and Samson judge in Israel. Samson was so astoundingly strong that he was taken for Hercules.

Because his corpse was nowhere to be found, the Latins made a god of Aeneas. The Sabines, likewise, divinized their first king, Sancus (or Sanctus, as some call him). At this time, Codrus, king of Athens, concealed his identity and allowed himself to be killed by the Peloponnesian foes of his city, and so came to be heralded as the saviour of his country. The Peloponnesians, it appears, had had oracular counsel to the effect that they would be victorious over the Athenians as long as they abstained from slaying the king. Codrus fooled them by showing up in the garb of a poor man and starting a brawl to provoke his own murder—hence Virgil's expression, *jurgia Codri,* 'the brawlings of Codrus.'[1] So he, too, was honored with godhood and sacrifices by the Athenians.

Aeneas' son, Silvius, was born (after his father's death) to Latinus' daughter, Lavinia (not to Creusa, mother of Ascanius who was the third king). When Silvius was king of the Latins, Oneus the twenty-ninth king of the Assyrians, Melanthus the sixteenth of the Athenians, and the priest Heli judge of the Hebrews, the kingdom of the Sicyonians came to an end. It had extended, we are told, over a period of 959 years.

Chapter 20

Early in the reigns of the kings just mentioned, the period of the judges in Israel came to an end and the kingdom began with Saul as first monarch. These were the days of the

1 *Eclogue* 5.11. However, Virgil had a different Codrus in mind.

Prophet Samuel. There began then, also, the line of Latin kings known as the Silvii, after Aeneas' son, Silvius, the first king of this name. His successors, of course, each had his own name, to which was added this surname, just as, long afterwards, the Roman emperors following Augustus were surnamed Caesar.

After forty years of rule Saul was ousted, so that none of his progeny might reign after him, and then died. David succeeded to the throne. At this time, too, when Codrus was killed, the Athenians ceased having kings and replaced them with magistrates for the administration of a republic. David ruled for forty-years, and then his son Solomon became king of the Israelites. He it was who built the magnificent Temple of God in Jerusalem. It was in his day that the Latins founded Alba and began to call their rulers kings of the Albani, though their land was still Latium. Solomon was followed by his son, Roboam, under whom the people were divided into two kingdoms, each with its own line of kings.

Chapter 21

Aeneas was made a god, but of the next eleven kings in Latium none received this honor. The twelfth, however, Aventinus, after he was killed in battle and buried on the hill which still bears his name, was joined to the number of such gods as those people made for themselves. Some writers, though, deny that he was killed and maintain that he simply disappeared. They also say that the Aventine Hill was not named after him but for the birds that flocked there.[1] After this king there was no further god-making in Latium save in the case of Romulus, the founder of Rome. Between Aventinus and Romulus there were two other kings, of whom

1 . . . *ex adventu avium.* Cf. Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.43.

the first was Procas, 'the glory of the Trojan race,' as Virgil calls him.[2] In his reign, while Rome was still, so to speak, in the process of coming-to-birth, the Assyrian kingdom, the greatest of them all, came to the end of its domination of nearly 1,305 years, reckoning from Ninus's father, Belus, the first king, who ruled the then small domain. Power passed to the Medes.

Procas of Latium was followed by Amulius, who made his brother Numitor's daughter, Rhea (also called Ilia, Romulus's mother), a vestal virgin. Later, we are told, she conceived twins by the god Mars. This myth was merely a way to cover up and even glorify the vestal's sin of lust, and the detail that a she-wolf suckled the babies when they were exposed was supposed to prove that Mars was the father, since wolves were sacred to Mars, and, therefore, the she-wolf must have given her breasts to the babies precisely because she recognized them to be the sons of her master, Mars. There are those, however, who claim that the whimpering waifs were first picked up by some harlot or other and suckled at her breasts. (They used to call harlots 'she-wolves,' *lupae,* and even nowadays houses of shame are called *lupanaria.* Later on, Romulus and Remus are supposed to have come into the hands of a shepherd named Faustulus, whose wife Acca brought them up. Of course, it is not unthinkable that God may have willed miraculously to succor these babies destined to found so illustrious a city, to rescue them from the water as a rebuke to the heartless human king who had ordered their drowning, and to provide them with a wild beast for suckling.

Amulius was succeeded in the kingdom of Latium by his brother Numitor, the grandfather of Romulus. In this king's first year, Rome was founded; thus it fell out that he continued to rule, but along with his grandson, Romulus.

2 *Aeneid* 6.767.

Chapter 22

To be brief, Rome was founded—a second, and the daughter of the first, Babylon, as it were. It was God's good pleasure, by means of this city, to subdue the whole world, to bring it into the single society of a republic under law, and to bestow upon it a widespread and enduring peace. But this was to be accomplished only at the expense of titanic hazards, hair-raising exertions, and much mutual devastation—for by this time the other peoples of the earth had also become stout-hearted and strong, practiced in the use of weapons, and unwilling to yield. It is true that the Assyrian kingdom in a series of wars brought nearly all of Asia under the yoke. But these could not have been wars fraught with such harrowing difficulties, because the nations at that time were still unschooled in self-defense; neither were they as populous and powerful as they later became. When Ninus conquered all of Asia save India, not many more than a thousand years had gone by since the great world-wide flood, from which only eight men escaped in Noe's ark. It was not, you may be sure, with Assyrian speed and ease that Rome came to master thoroughly the Eastern and Western peoples whom we see subject to the Empire today. For, wheresoever she turned in her gradual growth and expansion, she found them rugged and ready to do battle.

At the time Rome was founded, God's people had been in the promised land for 718 years. Of these, twenty-seven were the years of Josue; 329 belonged to the age of the judges; and 362 to the age of the kings. At this point the king in Juda was named Achaz, or, according to others' chronology, Ezechias. It is certain that this latter excellent and most devout king ruled in the time of Romulus. In the other division of the Hebrews, the kingdom called Israel, Osee had begun his reign.

Chapter 23

It was at this time, some authors say, that the Erythrean Sibyl prophesied. Varro, by the way, has pointed out that there were several sibyls—not just one. The Sibyl of Erythrae, at any rate, wrote some things that clearly concern Christ. I first read her sayings in a Latin poetic version marked by poor Latinity and poor metrical structure, but this was the fault of the blundering translator, whoever he was, as I came to realize later on. For, one day when the distinguished proconsul, Flaccianus, who was a man of great eloquence and learning, was conversing with me about Christ, he brought out a Greek manuscript containing, he said, the poems of the Sibyl of Erythrae.[1] In the text he showed me how in a certain passage the initial letters of the verses fell in such sequence you could read the acrostic, IESOUS XREISTÒS THEOU UIÒS SŌTER, which is Greek for 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.' These verses, translated into verse, read as follows:

> Judgment shall come, and the sweat of the earth be its signal.
> Even the monarch eternal shall come from the heavens,
> Suddenly come, in His flesh, to the dreaded tribunal.
> O faithful and faithless alike shall be seeing their Maker
> Uplifted with heavenly friends at the term of the ages.
> Souls with their bodies conjoined shall He summon to judgment.
>
> Xanthic with withering brambles the garden untended.
> Riches shall many reject and their long-cherished idols.

1 Modern scholars date this 'Sibylline' acrostic toward the end of the second century of the Christian era. For St. Augustine's own doubts, cf. below, 18.46.

Enormous the blaze that shall burn the broad seas and the heavens;
Its terrible blasts shall break open the portals of Hades.
Saints in their flesh shall shine free in the light of this wild-fire—
The same that shall roast without ending the flesh of the wicked.
Openly speak shall each man his most secret wrong-doing,
Sounding the depths shall God open their hearts to the daylight.

Then gnashing of teeth shall resound and most horrible weeping.
Even the sun shall not shine and the stars shall fall silent;
Over and done with the moonlight, the sky wrapped in darkness.
Up shall the valleys be leveled, the hilltops be downcast,

Under and over in human affairs shall be ended.
Into the fields the mountains sink down and the billows.
Over and done with the earth and the whole of its holdings.
Spring-source and river alike shall be boiling with fire.

Swelling, the trumpet shall sound from the height of the heavens
Over the criminal damned the sad tale of their wanderings.
Tartarus' pit shall the quake-shaken earth be revealing.
Rivers of brimstone and fire shall fall from the heavens.
Judged before God shall the kings of the world then stand.

However, when the original translator tried to render the Greek into Latin, he found it impossible to retain perfectly the sequence of initial letters; for, wherever the Greek letter for Y occurred, no Latin words beginning with the corresponding letter and at the same time suitable to the verses' meaning could be found. The refractory verses are numbers five, eighteen, and nineteen.[2] However, by connecting the initial letters of all the verses, these three excepted, and then mentally substituting for the initial letters used in the latter the Greek letter for Y, even the Latin reader could see a transliteration of the Greek acrostic which read: IESOUS XREISTÒS THEOU UIÒS SŌTER.

The verses are twenty-seven in number, which is the cube of three. Three times three equals nine; three times nine (raising the square to a cube) equals twenty-seven. If, moreover, you string along together the initial letters of the five Greek words in question, you get the Greek word, *Ichthys,* which means fish. This, by mystical application, is a name for Christ, because, as a fish can live in the depths of waters, Christ was able to live in the abyss of our mortality without sin, which is truly to live.

This Erythrean (or, as some are persuaded, Cumaean) Sibyl's entire poem, of which I have cited but a tiny segment, contains nothing at all in favor of worshiping false or man-made gods. Quite to the contrary, it speaks out so openly against them and their votaries that the prophetess herself, it seems, must be counted among those who belonged to the City of God.

Lactantius, too, has woven into one of his books[3] some sibylline prophecies concerning Christ, but he does not indicate their authorship. These passages, which he quoted

2 In Father Honan's English version all of the initial letters of the Greek acrostic are preserved.
3 *Institutiones* 4.18.

in different places, I have decided to put down all together in a single connected sequence: 'Afterwards, says she, he shall fall into the unjust hands of unbelievers; they shall strike God with unclean hands and shall spit upon him the poisonous spittle of their impure mouths; but he shall simply give over his holy back to their whips. . . . And silently he shall take their blows so that none may know the source or the meaning of the word he addresses to hell as he is crowned with thorns. . . . For meat they have given him gall, and for drink, vinegar; this is the kind of hospitality they shall show him at table. . . . Thou fool—not to have recognized thy God, displaying himself before the minds of men; instead, you crowned him with thorns and brewed him the cup of bitter-tasting gall . . . . But the veil of the temple shall be rent; and at midday there shall be a night of pitch-blackness lasting for three hours. . . . And, having died, he shall sleep the sleep of death for three days; then he shall come back from hell to the daylight, the first of the arisen, establishing the beginning of resurrection for those whom he has recalled.'

These are the sibylline prophecies which, as I have said, Lactantius used bit by bit to support the progression of his argument. I have strung them along uninterruptedly, taking care to observe his divisions with capital letters—an arrangement which will remain clear if only the copyists hereafter will not neglect to keep the capitals where they belong.

I should say that some writers place the Erythrean Sibyl at the time of the Trojan War rather than in Romulus' day.

Chapter 24

After the 'theological' poets, of whom Orpheus was the most highly esteemed, there came seven other seers to whom was accorded the title, *Sophoì,* which is Greek for Wise Men.

One of these, Thales the Milesian, is said to have lived during the reign of Romulus. In this same period the ten tribes known, since the division, as Israel were conquered by the Chaldaeans and led off into captivity. Consequently, there remained in Judea only the two tribes known as Juda with their capital at Jerusalem.

Because the corpse of the dead Romulus, like that of Aeneas, was nowhere to be found, the Romans elevated him also to godhood, as everyone knows perfectly well. This practice had been discontinued, and when it was reverted to later on in the days of the Caesars it was a matter of flattery, not one of faith.[1] At any rate, Cicero[2] gives great credit to Romulus for having won such distinction not in an age when men were primitive, illiterate, and easily taken in, but in one when men were both cultivated and learned, even though the razor-sharp and fine-spun volubility of the philosophers was yet to bud and burst into foaming bloom.[3]

However, granted that more advanced times did cease to divinize any more dead men, they did not leave off worshiping as gods those whom the ancients had so established. What is worse, they enhanced the seductiveness of this empty and impious superstition with graven images—a thing unknown to their forefathers. What is still worse, the unclean demons at work in their hearts (tricking them, too, by means of lying oracles) drove them to portray in filthy plays consecrated to the honor of the false gods the same false gods' mythical crimes, which this more sophisticated age was no longer imaginatively creating.

Numa came to the throne after Romulus. This king's policy was to buttress Rome with quantities of false gods—and the more the better. Yet he himself did not succeed, after his

1 . . . *nec postea nisi adulando, non errando, factum est.*
2 *De re publica* 2.10.18.
3 . . . *quamvis nondum efferbuerat ac pullaverat philosophorum subtilis et acuta loquacitas.*

death, in being added to the horde. Apparently, people thought he had so stuffed heaven with divinities that there was no room left for him. While he was ruling in Rome, the godless king Manasses, by whom the Prophet Isaias was put to death, was beginning his reign among the Hebrews. These, they say, were the days of the Sibyl of Samos.

Chapter 25

When Sedechias was ruling over the Hebrews and Tarquin Priscus, successor of Ancus Martius, over the Romans, the magnificent Temple which Solomon built in Jerusalem was demolished and the Jewish people were led off captive into Babylonia. These events had been foretold when the Prophets had chided them for their sins and infidelities. Jeremias, specifically, prophesied even the duration of the captivity.[1]

In these days, we are told, Pittacus of Mitylene, another of the Seven Wise Men, lived. Eusebius has written that the other five (besides Thales and Pittacus whom we have mentioned) lived during the Babylonian captivity of God's people; these were Solon of Athens, Chilo of Lacedemon, Periander of Corinth, Cleobalus of Lindus, and Bias of Priene. All seven of them lived later than the period of the 'theological' poets, and were famous for their praiseworthy manner of living and of enunciating their moral precepts. So far as writings are concerned, however, they bequeathed nothing to posterity, save Solon, who is reputed to have given the Athenians some laws, and Thales, who left books on the principles of natural philosophy.

In these days of the Jewish captivity, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and Xenophanes also became famous as natural philosophers. Pythagoras, too, was alive, the man who began to call wise men 'philosophers.'

1 Jer. 25.11.

Chapter 26

During the same period, Cyrus, king of the Persians and lord of the Chaldeans and Assyrians, loosened his hold on the captive Jews to the extent of sending back 50,000 of them to rebuild the Temple. These men had succeeded only in laying the foundations and building the altar when further enemy invasions rendered them powerless to continue, so the enterprise was put off until the days of Darius. This was the period, too, of the happenings set down in the Book of Judith—a book which, I am told, the Jews have not included in their canon of Holy Writ.

Under the Persian king, Darius, the seventy years of captivity predicted by Jeremias ran out, and the Jews were once again set free. At this time, Tarquin was the seventh Roman king, but after his expulsion the Romans entered upon a period free from royal domination. Up to this time the people of Israel had had many Prophets, but the writings of only a few of them have been accepted as canonical—whether by the Jews or by Christians. In bringing to a close the preceding Book, I promised to quote from some of these Prophets, and now the time has come to do so.

Chapter 27

In order to fix the date of the age of the Prophets, we must go back somewhat in history. Osee, who comes first among the twelve lesser Prophets, opens his prophecy with the words: 'The word of the Lord that came to Osee in the days of Ozias and Joathan, Achaz, and Ezechias, kings of Juda.' Amos, too, writes that he was a prophet in the days of King Ozias, and he adds the name of King Jeroboam, the former's contemporary in Israel. Isaias, the son of Amos (either of

Amos the Prophet just mentioned, or more probably of another man by the same name who was not a prophet), indicates the date of his prophecies, by prefacing his book with the names of the same four kings set down by Osee. Further, Micheas sets the period of his prophecies as coming just after the days of Ozias, for he mentions the next three kings in Osee's listing: namely, Joathan, Achaz, and Ezechias.

According to their own testimony, then, these Prophets were contemporaries. To them we must add Jonas during the reign of Ozias, and Joel in the time of Ozias's successor, King Joathan; but these dates we learn from the Chronicles, not from their own writings which are silent on the subject of chronology.

This prophetic era taken as a whole embraces the years between King Procas of the Latins (or his immediate antecessor, Aventinus) and King Romulus of the Romans (or even the beginning of the reign of his successor, Numa Pompilius, at which time Ezechias was still ruling in Juda. Thus, these springs of prophecy were, so to speak, gushing forth at the very time when the Assyrian kingdom was falling and the Roman was rising, so that, just as in the early days of Assyrian power, Abraham lived and received the unmistakable promises that in his seed all nations were to be blessed, so, in the beginning of the Western Babylon, under whose sway Christ was to come and make good those promises, the voices of the Prophets, in words and writings, were raised to reveal this tremendous reality that was to come. It is true that from royal times on the people of Israel were almost never without prophets, but these prophets were, so to speak, their private property. Now, however, that the foundations of that great city which was to be mistress of the nations were being laid down, it was right that there be written down imperishably that more revealing prophetic literature which was destined, in due time, to be so great a blessing to races other than the Jews.

Chapter 28

Because Osee is such a profound Prophet, it is no easy matter to get at his meaning. Still, I must keep my promise and quote something from him at this point. He says: 'And it shall be in the place where it was said to them: You are not my people; it shall be said to them: You are the sons of the living God.'[1]

The Apostles themselves understood this text as a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles who were previously not God's people.[2] And because the Gentiles are spiritually sons of Abraham and correctly therefore alluded to as Israel, Osee goes on to say: 'And the children of Juda and the children of Israel shall be gathered together: and they shall appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the earth.' Now, to add one word of explanation to this text would be to lose the savor of Osee's prophetic style.[3] Let the reader, therefore, on his own, bring to mind that 'chief corner-stone' and those two 'walls' and he will recognize the one made up of Jews under the designation 'Juda,' and the other made up of Gentiles under the designation 'Israel,' both of them built upon, and supported by, a single 'foundation' and both rising 'out of the earth.'[4]

Further, Osee has something to say of those carnal Israelites who decline now to believe in Christ but who will eventually believe in Him (that is, their progeny will, for those living today will die as their time comes): 'For the children of Israel shall sit many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without altar, and without ephod, and without therephim.' Is there anyone who cannot see that

1 Osee 1.10.
2 Rom. 9.26.
3 . . . *eloquii prophetici obtundetur sapor.*
4 Cf. Eph. 2.14,20.

this describes the condition of the Jewish people in our own day?

But let us hear what Osee goes on to say: 'And after this the children of Israel shall return, and shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king: and they shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the last days.'[5] You will never find a prophecy plainer than this, for the name King David means Christ who, as St. Paul says, 'was born according to the flesh of the offspring of David.'[6] Further on still, Osee foretold the resurrection of Christ on the third day, but in the mysterious way that is proper to prophecy. He says: 'He shall heal us after two days, and on the third day we shall rise up again.'[7] This is the idea underlying the words of St. Paul: 'Therefore if you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above.'[8]

The Prophet Amos, too, has predictions not unlike those of Osee. He says: 'Be prepared to meet thy God, O Israel, for behold I am the one who form the thunder, and create the wind, and declare to men their Christ.'[9] And, in another place: 'In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen: and I will close up the breaches of the walls thereof, and repair what is fallen: and I will rebuild it as in the days of old, so that the remnant of men may seek me out, and all nations, because my name is invoked upon them: saith the Lord that doth these things.'[10]

Chapter 29

The twelve minor Prophets are so called because they

5 Osee 3.4,5.
6 Rom. 1.3.
7 Osee 6.2.
8 Col. 3.1.
9 Amos 4.12,13.
10 Amos 9.11,12.

wrote short books by comparison with the major Prophets, so called because they wrote longer ones. Isaias is one of the latter, but I quote him here in connection with the two foregoing minor Prophets because he belongs to the same era. Along with the usual rebukes for sinfulness, precepts of righteousness, and predictions of punishments to be visited upon sinful people, he has prophecies touching Christ and His Church, the King and the City which He founded, which are more numerous than those of the other Prophets—so much so that some have called him an evangelist rather than a Prophet. I shall set down here only one of these many prophecies, because I am eager to finish this work. Speaking in the person of God the Father, Isaias says:

'Behold my servant shall understand, he shall be exalted and extolled, and shall be exceeding high. As many have been astonished at thee, so shall his visage be inglorious among men, and his form among the sons of men. He shall sprinkle many nations, kings shall shut their mouth at him. For they to whom it was not told of him, have seen; and they that heard not, have beheld. Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? And he shall grow up as a tender plant before him, and as a root out of a thirsty ground. There is no beauty in him nor comeliness: and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness that we should be desirous of him. Despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity, and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows; and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord laid on him

the iniquity of us all. He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth. He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth. He was taken away from distress, and from judgment. Who shall declare his generation? Because he is cut off out of the land of the living: for the wickedness of my people have I struck him. And he shall give the ungodly for his burial, and the rich for his death: because he hath done no iniquity, neither was there deceit in his mouth. And the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity: if he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand. Because his soul hath labored, he shall see and be filled: by his knowledge shall this my just servant justify many and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong, because he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked: and he hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors.'[1]

So much concerning Christ. Now let us hear what he has to say about the Church: 'Give praise, O thou barren, that bearest not: sing forth praise, and make a joyful noise, thou that didst not travail with child: for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and stretch out the skins of thy tabernacles, spare not: lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt pass on to the right hand, and to the left: and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and shall inhabit the desolate cities. Fear not, for thou shalt not be confounded, nor blush: for thou shalt not be put to shame, because thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shall remember no more the reproach of thy widowhood. For he that made thee shall rule over thee, the Lord of hosts in

1 Isa. 52.13-15; 53.1-12.

his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of all the earth,'[2] and so on.

Let this suffice. There are some points here which need explanation, but the rest is so obvious that even our foes will find enough to force them to grasp the meaning even against their will.

Chapter 30

The Prophet Micheas, speaking of Christ under the symbol of a high mountain, has this to say: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the top of the mountains, and high above the hills; and people shall flow to it. And many nations shall come in haste, and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord out of Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off.'[1]

Further, this Prophet foretold even the place in which Christ was to be born: 'And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity. Therefore will he give them up even till the time wherein she that travaileth will bring forth: and the remnant of his brethren shall be converted to the children of Israel. And he shall stand, and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the height of the name of the Lord his God: and they shall be

2 Isa. 54.1-5.

1 Mich. 4.1-3.

converted, for now shall he be magnified even to the ends of the earth.'[2]

Jonas, too, was a Prophet of Christ in words, but his own 'passion,' so to speak, spoke louder even than words could of Christ's death and resurrection. For, why was he taken into the whale's belly, only to be restored on the third day, except to prefigure Christ who was to return from the depths of hell on the third day?

All of Joel's prophecies require extensive explanation if one is to bring out clearly the things that have to do with Christ and His Church. Nevertheless, I am going here to insert one passage which the Apostles themselves quoted when the Holy Spirit, as Christ had promised, came down upon the assembled believers: 'And it shall come to pass after this, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy: your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Moreover upon my servants and handmaids in those days I will pour forth my spirit.'[3]

Chapter 31

Three of the minor Prophets, Abdias, Nahum, and Habacuc, fail to indicate the dates of their prophecies, nor do I find these in the Chronicles of Eusebius and Jerome, which mention Abdias alongside Micheas, but not in the passage where the date of Micheas, as furnished by his own book, is noted down. This is probably an error of copyists—who so often transcribe negligently other people's hard work. So far as Nahum and Habacuc are concerned, I can find no mention at all of them in my copies of the Chronicles. Nevertheless,

2 Mich. 5.2-4.
3 Joel 2.28,29.

these men are in the canon, too, and it would not be right for me to pass them by.

The Prophet Abdias, whose book is the briefest of all the books of prophecy, speaks out against Idumea, the progeny of Esau, the reprobate elder of Isaac's twin sons, a grandson of Abraham. Now, if this is the kind of figure of speech in which a part stands for the whole, we can take Idumea as meaning all the Gentiles. In this case, we must acknowledge as pertaining to Christ the following selection from this Prophet: 'In mount Sion shall be salvation, and the holy one.' A little further on, near the end, he says: 'And the redeemed shall come up from mount Sion to defend the mountain of Esau, and it shall be a kingdom unto the Lord.'[1] These words, indeed, appear to have been realized when the 'redeemed from mount Sion,' that is, Christ's faithful in Judea, and, above all, the Apostles themselves, came up to defend the mountain of Esau. The defense, of course, consisted in their peaching to them the Gospel and affording salvation to those who believed. For so they were rescued from the power of darkness and transferred into the kingdom of God. Abdias' last words, 'It shall be a kingdom unto the Lord,' make this clear. To resume, Mount Sion stands for Judea, out of which were to come salvation and the Holy One, who is Jesus Christ; Idumea is Mount Esau, the Church of the Gentiles defended by the redeemed from Mount Sion and made a kingdom to the Lord. All this was obscure before the event, but any believer can understand it now that it has been fulfilled.

The Prophet Nahum (or, better, God speaking through him) says: 'I will destroy the graven and molten thing, I will make it thy grave. Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, and that preacheth peace. O Juda, keep thy festivals, and pay thy vows, for it shall no

1 Abd. 17.21.

longer be that they may pass into disuse. It is completed, it is consumed, it is taken away. He is come up that breatheth into thy face and rescueth thee from tribulation.'[2]

Anyone who knows the Gospels will recognize who it was that came up from hell and breathed the Holy Spirit into the face of Juda, that is, into the face of His Jewish disciples. The words about the 'festivals' are, of course, a reference to the New Testament, in which festivals are so spiritually renewed that they can never 'pass into disuse.' The rest of the prophecy, too, we see realized in that the Gospel brought about the destruction of 'graven and molten things,' that is, the idols of the false gods, consigned now to the oblivion of the 'grave.'

Surely, too, the words I am going to quote from Habacuc constitute a prophecy of the coming of Christ: 'And the Lord answered me, and said: Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables: that he that readeth it may run over it. For as yet the vision is far off, and it shall appear at the end and shall not lie: if it make any delay, wait for it: for it shall surely come, and shall not be slack.'[3]

Chapter 32

Surely, Habacuc, too, in his prayer and song, is addressing no one but Christ our Lord: 'O Lord, I have heard thy hearing, and was afraid; Lord, I have considered thy works, and was astonished.' What is this except the speechless wonder of a Prophet foreknowing a new and unlooked for salvation of mankind? 'Thou shalt be recognized between two living beings.' Here is Christ set between the two Testaments, or hanging between the two thieves, or standing between Moses and Elias when they conversed with Him on the

2 Cf. Nahum 1.14,15; 2.1.
3 Hab. 2.2,3.

mountaintop. 'When the years approach, thou shalt be known: in the coming of the time thou shalt be made manifest.' No need of explanation here. 'When my soul shall be disturbed in wrath, thou shalt be mindful of thy mercy.'[1] In this line Habacuc takes upon himself the person of the Jewish people who in great wrath crucified Christ, who was mindful of his mercy and said, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.'[2]

'God shall come from Theman, and the Holy One from the shadowy and thick-planted mountain.' (Some have translated the first clause as 'from the south' or 'from the south-west'—figures for noonday, that is, the burning of love and the brightness of truth.) 'The shadowy and thick-planted mountain' can be taken in several senses, but I like best to think of it as referring to the depths of those parts of Holy Writ which foretell Christ, for there are many 'shadowy and thick-planted' figures there which challenge the intelligence of anyone seeking to understand them. And Christ may be said to 'come from' them when the reader's understanding finally discovers Him there. 'His glory covered the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise.'[3] This is the same thought we find in the psalm: 'Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens, and thy glory above all the earth.'[4] 'His brightness shall be as the light.' What can this mean except that his renown shall bring to men the light of belief? 'Horns are in his hands.' Here we have a symbol of Christ's victorious cross. 'And he hath placed the unshakeable charity of his strength' needs no explanation. 'The word shall go before his face, and shall go forth into the field after his feet.' What can this signify but that, before Christ's coming on earth, He was

1 Cf. Hab. 3.2.
2 Luke 23.34.
3 Hab. 3.3.
4 Ps. 56.6.

foretold, and, after His return here from the dead, His Gospel was preached? 'He stood, and the earth was stirred.' That is, He stood His ground to succor us, and the earth was stirred to believe in Him. 'He looked upon them, and the nations melted.' This means that He had mercy upon and brought men to repentance. 'The mountains were crushed with violence' means that the pride of the high-minded was crushed by the powerful evidence of His miracles. 'The everlasting hills flowed down.' This means that we are brought down to lowliness in this world so that we may be lifted up in eternity. 'I beheld his goings made eternal on account of his labors.' That means: I saw that His sufferings and love were not without everlasting recompense. 'The tents of the Ethiopians shall shake with fear, and the tents of the land of Madian.' This signifies that even races not living under Roman law will be profoundly shaken by the news of His marvelous accomplishments, and will be numbered among Christian peoples. 'Wast thou angry, O Lord, with the rivers? or was thy wrath upon the rivers? or thy indignation upon the sea?' This question is asked because Christ did not come the first time to judge the world but to save it. 'Because thou shald ride upon horses, and thy riding is salvation.' This means: Thy evangelists shall carry Thee, and be reined by Thee, and Thy Gospel shall be salvation to those who believe in Thee.

'Bending, thou shalt bend thy bow over the sceptres, saith the Lord.' We may paraphrase thus: Thou shalt hold the threat of thy judgment even over the rulers of the earth. 'The earth shall be rent with rivers'[5] means that the in-pouring words of those who preach Thee shall cleave open the hearts of men to confess Thy name—those very men to whom it was said: 'Rend your hearts, and not your gar-

5 Hab. 3.4-9.

ments.'[6] 'The peoples shall see thee and grieve' means that through mourning they will be blessed.[7]

'Scattering the waters with thy walking' is the equivalent of 'walking in those who preach thee everywhere, thou scatterest on every side the streams of thy teaching.' 'The abyss put forth its voice.' Has not the depth of man's heart spoken out its inmost faith? 'The depth of its phantasy' is an exposition of the foregoing verse, for the depth in question is 'the abyss,' and one should here fill in again with 'has put forth its voice,' in the sense I have just explained. The phantasy is indeed the vision which man has not kept to himself nor covered over, but by profession of faith uttered for hearing. 'The sun hath been lifted up and the moon hath stood in its order.' I paraphrase this way: Christ has ascended into heaven and the Church has been constituted under her King. 'Into the light thy spears shall go,' that is, Your words shall not be spoken in hiding but in the open for all to hear. For the phrase, 'In the brightness of the fleshing of thy weapons,'[8] fill in again with the clause, 'Thy spears shall go,' for Christ told His Apostles: 'What I tell you in darkness, speak it in the light.'[9]

'By thy threats thou shalt diminish the earth, and in thy wrath thou shalt cast down the nations' may be paraphrased in this fashion: By threatening You will humble men, and the haughty You strike one against another for a punishment. There is no need for explaining what follows: 'Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, to save thine anointed ones; thou hast sent death upon the heads of the wicked.' 'Thou hast lifted up the bonds even to the neck.' This may be understood with reference to the good bonds of wisdom, when

6 Joel 2.13.
7 Cf. Matt. 5.5.
8 Hab. 3.10,11.
9 Matt. 10.27.

God puts them like restraining fetters upon a man's feet and like a necklace about his neck. 'Thou hast cut down [the bonds] in stupefaction.' God, indeed, has lifted up good bonds upon us and has cut away evil bonds, and 'in stupefaction,' that is, marvelously beyond expectation. It was of the evil bonds that the Psalmist sang: 'Thou hast broken my bonds.'[10] 'The heads of the mighty shall wag over it,' that is, in stupefaction.

'They shall open their teeth like a pauper eating in hiding.' The Gospel has given us the picture of certain powerful Jews who, admiring the words and deeds of our Lord, came to Him in hunger for the bread of His teaching, but ate it secretly because they feared their compatriots.[11] 'And thou hast sent thy horse into the sea riling many waters.' The many waters are, of course, many peoples, for unless all were agitated, some would not be converted through fear, nor others be brought furiously to persecute the former. 'I paid heed, and my bowels were aghast at the voice of my lips' prayer; shaking entered into my bones, and the way of my body was disturbed beneath me.' In this passage Habacuc examined the meaning of his own words and was terrified at the sense of his prayer, this prophetic utterance in which he descried things that were to come; specifically, the tribulations which the Church was to have following upon the rousing of many peoples. And at once he saw that he was a member, too, and went on to say: 'I shall rest in the day of tribulation'—with reference to those who rejoice in hope and are patient in tribulation: 'That I may go up to the people of my pilgrimage.' Habacuc, that is, departs from the hostile company of his carnal fellow countrymen who are not wayfarers in this world seeking the heavenly fatherland.

'For the fig tree shall not blossom; and there shall be no

10 Ps. 115.16.
11 John 3.2; 19.38.

spring in the vines. The labor of the olive tree shall fail; and the fields shall yield no food; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls.' In this text, Habacuc, using the prophetic figure of earthly abundance, foresees how the Jews who were to kill Christ would lose the rich abundance of their spiritual resources. They suffered so wrathful a punishment from God because, ignoring His justice, they tried to justify themselves. So the Prophet continues at once: 'But I will rejoice in the Lord, and I will joy in God my saviour. The Lord God is my strength; and he will make my feet like the feet of harts; he will put me upon high places, that I may conquer in his song.' This is the same song to which the psalm refers: 'And he set my feet upon a rock, and directed my steps. And he put a new canticle into my mouth, a song to our God.'[12] He, indeed, conquers in the song of the Lord who takes his pleasure in praising not himself but God, as it is said elsewhere: 'let him who takes pride, take pride in the Lord.'[13] In this last verse of Habacuc, I prefer the translation, 'in God my Jesus,' which some manuscripts have, rather than 'in God my saviour,' which loses the mention of that Name which to utter is for us a joy so dear and sweet.[14]

Chapter 33

Having quoted from the minor Prophets, I now turn to Jeremias, who, like Isaias, belongs to the major Prophets. He was a Prophet during the reign of Josias in Jerusalem and of Ancus Martius in Rome and close to the beginning of the Babylonian captivity. As a matter of fact, he tells us that he continued to prophesy up to the fifth month of the captivity.

12 Ps. 39.3,4.
13 1 Cor. 1.31.
14 . . . *nomen . . . quod est nobis amicius et dulcius nominare.*

With him I couple Sophonias, one of the minor Prophets, because he tells us that he, too, prophesied in the days of King Josias, although he does not indicate up to what date. Jeremias continued as late as the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, fifth king of Rome, who began to reign at the time the captivity took place.

Jeremias has this prophecy of Christ: 'The breath of our mouth, Christ the Lord, it taken in our sins.'[1] A brief word, but clearly showing that Christ is our Lord and that He suffered for us. Again, in another place: 'This is our God, and there shall no other be accounted of in comparison of him. He found out all the way of knowledge, and gave it to Jacob his servant, and to Israel his beloved. Afterwards, he was seen upon earth and conversed with men.'[2] Some critics attribute this passage, not to Jeremias, but to the scribe, Baruch; the more prevailing opinion ascribes it to the former.

Further, Jeremias says of Christ: 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and I will raise up to David a just branch; and a king shall reign and shall be wise; and shall execute justice and judgment in the earth. In those days shall Juda be saved, and Israel shall dwell confidently; and this is the name that they shall call him: The Lord our just one.'[3] On the calling of the Gentiles which he foresaw and we today see as realized, the Prophet had this to say: 'O Lord, my might and my strength, and my refuge in the day of tribulation; to thee the Gentiles shall come from the ends of the earth, and shall say: Surely our fathers have possessed lies, a vanity which hath not profited them.'[4] And because the Jews were not going to accept Christ but to kill Him instead, Jeremias goes on: 'The heart is slow throughout all, and

1 Lam. 4.20.
2 Bar. 3.36-38.
3 Jer. 23.5.6.
4 Jer. 16.19.

he is a man, and who acknowledges him?' Above, in Book XVII, I quoted a text from Jeremias having to do with the New Testament whose Mediator is Christ: 'Behold the days shall come, saith the Lord, and I will make a new convenant with the house of Israel,'[5] etc., which you can read there.

In passing, I shall put down this prophecy of Christ from Sophonias, Jeremias' contemporary: 'Wherefore expect me, saith the Lord, in the day of my resurrection that is to come, for my judgment is to assemble the Gentiles, and to gather the kingdom.'[6] And, in another place: 'And the Lord shall be terrible upon them, and shall consume all the gods of the earth: and they shall adore him every man from his own place, all the islands of the Gentiles.'[7] A little further on we read: 'Because then I will restore to the people a chosen lip, that all may call upon the name of the Lord, and may serve him with one shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, shall my suppliants the children of my dispersed people bring me an offering. In that day thou shalt not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee thy broud boasters, and thou shalt no more be lifted up because of my holy mountain. And I will leave in thee a meek and lowly people: and the remnant of Israel shall fear my name.'[8] This is, of course, the remnant concerning which St. Paul quotes a prophecy taken from another place: 'Though the number of the children of Israel are as the sands of the sea, the remnant shall be saved.'[9] The remnants of this race have already believed in Christ.

5 Jer. 31.31.
6 Soph. 3.8.
7 Soph. 2.11.
8 Soph. 3.9-12.
9 Rom. 9.27; Isa. 10.22.

Chapter 34

The first Prophets to speak at Babylon, during the captivity, were Daniel and Ezechiel. Both of them are numbered among the major Prophets. Daniel went so far as even to specify the very time of Christ's coming and passion. But it requires a lengthy calculation to make this clear, and it has already been done time and again by others before me.

Here, however, is a text of Daniel having to do with Christ's power and His Church: 'I beheld therefore in the vision of the night, and, lo, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and he came even to the Ancient of days: and they presented him before him. And he gave him power, and glory, and a kingdom, and all peoples, tribes, and tongues shall serve him: his power is an everlasting power that shall not be taken away: and his kingdom that shall not be destroyed.'[1]

Ezechiel, too, heralded Christ in prophecy. Calling Him David's seed (just as the Son of God is called the servant of God because of the servile form He assumed in His Incarnation), Ezechiel speaks of Him in the role of God the Father: 'And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: he shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God: and my servant David the prince in the midst of them: I the Lord have spoken it.'[2]

Here is another text from Ezechiel: 'And I will make them one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king over them all: and they shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided any more into two kingdoms. Nor shall they be defiled any more with their idols, nor with their abominations, nor with all their iniquities:

1 Dan. 7.13,14.
2 Ezech. 34.23.

and I will save them out of all the places in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them: and they shall be my people and I will be their God. And my servant David shall be king over them and they shall have one shepherd.'[3]

Chapter 35

There remain for discussion the three minor Prophets who belong to the closing days of the captivity, namely, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias.

To begin with, Aggeus has the following brief but clear prophecy of Christ and the Church: 'For thus saith the Lord of hosts: yet one little while, and I will move the heaven and the earth, and the sea and the dry land. And I will move all nations; and the desired of all nations shall come.'[1]

It is obvious that this prediction is, in part, already fulfilled; the rest we may confidently expect at the end of the world. Surely, God set the heavens rocking when angels and a star stood as witnesses to the birth of Christ; surely, too, He moved the earth when He performed the tremendous miracle of giving Christ a virgin-birth. Surely, He moved the sea and the dry land when He made Christ's name known throughout the whole world, on island and on mainland. For the rest, we ourselves are witnesses of the fact that all nations are being moved to accept the faith. The last part of the text, 'and the desired of all nations shall come,' refers to Christ's second coming. For, before the whole world can await him and desire His coming, it must first believe in Him and love Him.

3 Ezech. 37.22-24.

1 Ag. 2.7.

Now I turn to Zacharias. Speaking of Christ and His Church, he has this to say: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King will come to thee, the just and saviour: he is poor and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass. And his power shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the end of the earth.'[2]

We read in the Gospel the exact moment of this prophecy's fulfillment,[3] when our Lord used this kind of beast for his journey into Jerusalem. The prophecy itself, moreover, is quoted at that point, as much of it, at least, as was needful.

In another passage, Zacharias addresses himself prophetically to our Lord Himself and, speaking to Him of the remission of sins which His blood was to win, says: 'Thou also by the blood of thy testament has sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water.'[4] Now, even the orthodox may have different opinions with respect to the identity of the waterless pit in question. But for me, the best interpretation is to see in this figure the dry and sterile depths of human misery itself, unwatered by grace and choked with the mire of sin. Think, for instance, of that other text, in the Psalms: 'He brought me out of the pit of misery and the mire of dregs.'[5]

Now I turn to Malachias. This man, prophesying of the Church which by Christ's power has now expanded far and wide, takes on the person of God to say to the Jews: 'I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift from your hand. For from the rising of the sun even to the going down thereof, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is

2 Zach. 9.9,10.
3 Matt. 21.
4 Zach. 9.11.
5 Ps. 39.3.

offered to my name a clean oblation for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.'[6]

Now, if we see that everywhere, in our time, 'from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof' this sacrifice is being offered by Christ's priests according to the order of Melchisedech, and if the Jews are in no position to deny that their sacrifices, rejected in the first verse, have come to an end—how is that they can be looking for another Christ? They read the prophecy; they see its fulfillment before their very eyes. Why can they not realize that He must have been the Christ to fulfil it, since nobody else could?

A little further on Malachias speaks of Christ, again in the person of God: 'My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave him fear; and he feared me, and he was afraid before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and in equity, and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge and they shall seek the law at his mouth because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts.'[7]

No one should be astonished to hear Christ spoken of as 'the angel of the Lord of hosts.' He was called His servant because He came to men in the form of a servant; similarly, He was called an angel because of the evangel which He brought to men.[8] In Greek, *evangélion* means 'good news' and *ángelos* means 'messenger.'

Speaking further of Christ in the same vein, Malachias says: 'Behold I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face. And presently the Lord whom you seek, and the angel of the testament whom you desire shall come into his temple. Behold, he comes, says the Lord of hosts. And

6 Mal. 1.10,11.
7 Mal. 2.5-7.
8 . . . *sic angelus propter evangelium.*

who shall be able to think of the day of his coming? And who shall stand to see him?'[9] In this text he foretells both comings of Christ, the first and the second—the first where he says: 'And presently the Lord shall come into his temple.' This refers to Christ's body of which He Himself said in the Gospel: 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.'[10] His second coming is foretold in these words: 'Behold, he comes, says the Lord of hosts. And who shall be able to think of the day of his coming? And who shall stand to see him?'

The phrase, 'The Lord whom you seek and the angel of the testament whom you desire,' means that the Jews in accordance with the Scriptures they read seek Christ and desire that He come. Yet, many of them failed to recognize this object of their seeking and desiring when He did come, because they were blinded in heart by their own long-standing sinfulness. Beyond doubt, the 'testament' to which the Prophet refers here and in the text above is the New Testament with its promises of everlasting blessing, not, surely, the Old Testament with its temporal promises.

Those who are spiritually immature set great store by temporal promises and serve God with an eye to such remunerations. Then, when they see that people of evil life prosper, they are very much upset. For their enlightenment, Malachias goes on to differentiate the eternal blessedness of the New Testament, which only the good shall win, from the purely earthly good fortune of the Old, which as often as not comes to the wicked. He says: 'Your words have been unsufferable to me, saith the Lord. And you have said: What have we spoken against thee? You have said: He laboreth in vain that serveth God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked sorrowful be-

9 Mal. 3.1,2.
10 John 2.19.

fore the Lord of hosts? Wherefore now we call the proud people happy, for they that work wickedness are built up, and they have tempted God and are preserved. Then they that feared the Lord spoke everyone with his neighbor: and the Lord gave ear and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that fear the Lord and think of his name.'[11] The book in question is, of course, again the New Testament.

Now let us hear the rest. 'And they shall be my special possession, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I do judgment; and I will spare them as a man spareth his son who serveth him. And you shall return, and shall see the difference between the just and the wicked; and between him that serveth God and him that serveth not. For behold the day shall come kindled as a furnace: and all the proud and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble: and the day that cometh shall set them on fire, saith the Lord of hosts.'[12]

The day in question is, of course, the day of the Last Judgment, concerning which I will have a great deal more to say, God willing, when the proper time comes.

Chapter 36

After these three Prophets, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias, but during the period of freedom following upon the Babylonian captivity, Esdras wrote a book which is historical rather than prophetic. The same is true of the Book of Esther, whose exploit for God's glory took place not long after those days. However, one might say that Esdras did prophesy Christ in the passage where some young men are discussing

11 Mal. 3.13-16.
12 Mal. 3.17,18; 4.1-3.

the question as to which is the most powerful of all things.[1] The first man said, a king; the second, wine; the third, the woman who usually gives the king his orders. Then the third said 'No,' and proceeded to prove that the truth is all-prevailing. Now, when we turn to the Gospel, we see that the truth is Christ.

After the Jews had restored the Temple, there were no further kings over them until Aristobolus. In the interim they had princes the duration of whose reigns, however, we do not find reckoned in the Holy Scriptures which are recognized as canonical by the Jews. But we do find them computed in other books, including the Books of the Machabees which the Church accepts as canonical because they record the great and heroic sufferings of certain martyrs who, before Christ's coming, fought even unto death to keep God's law and bore for it appalling persecution.

Chapter 37

Even in the days when the writings of our Prophets had already attracted close to world-wide attention, there were no pagan thinkers properly called 'philosophers,' in the sense first started by Pythagoras of Samos. Now, since Pythagoras won a name and fame for himself only about the time the Babylonian captivity ended, it is obvious that all other philosophers came still later than the Prophets. Socrates the Athenian, for example, master of all the famous philosophers of his age and the outstanding exponent of moral or practical wisdom, is dated later even than Esdras in the Chronicles. Plato was born shortly after Socrates, and was destined to outstrip all of his fellow disciples. Even if we go back beyond Pythagoras to those who were not yet styled 'philosophers,'

1 3 Esd. 3.4.

for example, to the Seven Wise Men or to the Physicists, who followed Thales in the careful scrutiny of nature, to men like Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras and others, we shall still find no men of pagan wisdom antedating the first of our Prophets. Thales, who leads this list, became well known during Romulus' reign, at the time when in Israel a torrent of prophecy broke loose in those minor Prophets whose words were destined to flow like rivers over the whole earth.

Consequently, it is only the Greek 'theological' poets—Orpheus, Linus, Musaeus, and the rest—who antedated all of the Hebrew Prophets included in the canon. They did not, however, antedate the first writer in our canon, Moses, the true theologian who truthfully preached the one true God. So far, then, as the Greeks are concerned, they may have reached the highest pitch of perfection in secular literature, but they have no foundation for boasting that, although their wisdom may not be superior to our religion (in which true wisdom lies), it is, at least, older.

On the other hand, I must admit that certain peoples other than the Greeks, the Egyptians, for example, had before Moses' time a certain body of learning which might be called their 'wisdom.' Otherwise, Holy Writ could not have said that Moses was schooled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.[1] It tells how he was born there, adopted and reared by Pharao's daughter, and put to learning letters.

Even so, if you remember that Abraham himself was a prophet, you will see that Egyptian wisdom, too, is posterior to the wisdom of our Prophets. For, what wisdom could there have been in Egypt, anyway, before Isis (who was worshiped as a great goddess after death) gave them an alphabet? She was the daughter of Inachus, first king of the Argives, and in this king's day Abraham was already a grandfather.

1 Acts 7.22.

Chapter 38

I may, in fact, find prophecy far earlier even than Abraham. I might regard—and rightly regard—our patriarch, Noe (who lived even before the great flood), as a prophet; for he was a prophet at least in the sense that the ark which he made, and in which he and his family were saved from the flood, was itself a prophecy of what is happening in the Church today. I might go even beyond Noe to Henoch, who lived as far back as the seventh generation from Adam. Does not the canonical Epistle of St. Jude the Apostle openly declare that Henoch spoke as a prophet?[1]

It is true, indeed, that the alleged writings of these two men have never been accepted as authoritative, either by the Jews or by us Christians, but that is because their extreme antiquity makes us afraid of handing out, as authentic, works that may be forgeries. The fact is that certain irresponsible people who believe anything as their whim dictates do hand about certain writings which are said to have been written by Henoch and Noe. But the canon, which must be kept immaculate, has repudiated these writings; not, of course, because there was any doubt about the holiness of these men themselves—for they were pleasing to God—but simply because it is too difficult to believe that the writings are authentic. Nor should this critical reserve with respect to writings allegedly of such enormous antiquity astonish anyone.

The point of exclusion from the canon may be illustrated from the Book of Kings. This deals with the history of Israel and Juda and contains many historical facts, some of which we have confidently included in the canonical Scriptures, while other facts are not mentioned in full, but are merely alluded to as being narrated in other books written by men who were Prophets and whose names are, in two instances,

1 Jude 14.

mentioned.[2] The 'other books' are not to be found in the Hebrew canon.

I confess that I know of no satisfactory explanation of this exclusion. However, I will suggest as an hypothesis that authors, to whom the Holy Spirit revealed such matters as should be binding in religious faith, could have written parts of their works in their capacity as careful historians, and other parts in their capacity as divinely inspired prophets, and that the distinction was so clear to the writers themselves that they understood that the former parts should be attributed to themselves while the others should be attributed to God speaking through them. Thus, the human parts would be a matter of fullness of historical knowledge, while the inspired parts would have the full force of religious revelation. It is with this last alone that the canon is concerned.

In regard now to such writings as fall outside the canon, and are passed off under the names of very ancient[3] prophets, these writings have no value even from the point of view of fullness of information, for the simple fact that no one can verfy whether they belong to the men whose names they bear. In a word, it is because they might be spurious that they are not to be trusted; and this is pre-eminently the case with works that contain declarations that run counter to the faith as contained in canonical writings, for then we can be absolutely sure that the attribution is spurious.

Chapter 39

We should pay no attention to those who maintain that the Hebrew language, merely as speech, was preserved through Heber (whence the name, Hebrew) and thus came

2 1 Par. 29.21; 2 Par. 9.29.
3 Reading *veterum* in place of *verorum* of the Mss. Cf. above, 15.23.

down to Abraham, but that written Hebrew began only with the Mosaic Law. The truth is that Hebrew, both spoken and written, was handed down from one to another of those ancient Patriarchs. Moses, in fact, took care to appoint teachers of reading and writing for God's people before they had any written record of God's Law.[1] The Septuagint Scripture calls these instructors *grammatoeisagōgoí,* which is Greek for 'bringers-in of letters,' because they brought them, in a sense, into their students' minds, or perhaps introduced their students to them.

Accordingly, no people should foolishly brag about their wisdom antedating that of our Patriarchs and Prophets, whose wisdom was from God. The Egyptians, for example, make a business of boasting about the antiquity of their learning. But it is a false and hollow boast, for, on examination, we discover that even their learning, such indeed as it was, did not antedate that of our Patriarchs. No one is going to be silly enough to say that the Egyptians were deeply versed in studies which are extremely difficult before they had even learned to read and write—that is, before Isis came there and taught them. Besides, what was their extraordinary learning, their vaunted 'wisdom,' except, in the main, astronomy and other cognate studies which furnish more in the way of intellectual calisthenics than any genuine illumination of the mind,[2] such as true wisdom affords.

Speaking of philosophy, it is the essential function of this subject to teach men how to attain happiness. There was nothing of this kind in Egypt until around the time of Mercury or Trismegistus, as he was called, when such studies began to win public attention. This was, admittedly, much earlier than the appearance of the sages and philosophers in Greece. Even so, it was later than Abraham, Isaac, and

1 Cf. Exod. 18.25, and St. Augustine's *Quaestiones in Heptateucha* 2.69.
2 . . . *magis ad exercenda ingenia quam ad inluminandas vera sapientia mentes.*

Jacob. What is more, it was later even than Moses himself. For Moses was a contemporary of Atlas, Prometheus' brother, the eminent astronomer, the maternal grandfather of Mercury the elder of whom Mercury Trismegistus was the grandson.

Chapter 40

Consequently, how utterly unconvincing is the presumptuous prattling of those who maintain that Egyptian astronomical science has a history of more than 100,000 years! From what books, pray, did they cull this number, if Queen Isis taught them to write not much more than 2,000 years ago? This point about the origin of Egyptian letters is made by Varro, no negligible authority in matters historical, and it fits in well with what we know from Holy Writ. Besides, since 6,000 years have not yet elapsed from the days of Adam, the first man, should we not ridicule, rather than bother to refute, those who strive to convince us of a temporal duration so different and so utterly contrary to this established truth?

Who can be a more trustworthy chronicler of things past than one who was also a prophet of things future which our eyes behold realized in the things present? The very disagreement of historians among themselves affords us an opportunity to chose for credence those whose contentions are not at variance with the divinely inspired history to which we adhere. Very different is the plight of the ungodly city's citizens scattered over the whole face of the earth! When these people study the books of men so tremendously learned that no one of them, they feel, can be taken lightly as an authority, and find them, nevertheless, entertaining discordant views on matters enormously removed from the memory of living man, they do not know

what or whom to believe. We, on the other hand, have the support of divine authority in the history of our religion. Accordingly, whatever in secular histories runs counter to it we do not hesitate to brand as wholly false, while with respect to non-parallel matters we remain indifferent. For, whether they be true or untrue, they make no important contribution to our living righteous and happy lives.

Chapter 41

To discuss historical topics, I left the philosophers alone for a while. Now I come back to them. These men, in all their laborious investigations, seem to have had one supreme and common objective: to discover what manner of living is best suited to laying hold upon happiness. Yet, they have ended up by disagreeing—disciples with masters, and disciples with fellow disciples. Why, except that they sought the answer to their question merely in human terms, depending solely upon human experience and human reasoning? It is true that some of their dissensions may be explained by a less worthy factor: namely, the vainglorious desire to appear wiser and more penetrating than one's colleague, less dependent upon others' opinions, and more of a creative thinker. Nevertheless, we must be ready to allow that some at least, perhaps many, who broke with their teachers or fellow students, did so out of a pure love of the truth, determined to fight for it as they understood it (whether it was actually the truth or not). What does it all go to prove except that human unhappiness cannot get very far along the road to happiness unless divine authority shows the way?

How different is the case of those writers who with good reason have been included in the final canon of Holy Writ. There is no shadow of disagreement among them. That is why

such enormous numbers of men, of every conceivable description, have quite rightly found in their writings the voice of God Himself or of God speaking through them—so many, and not just a handful of the formerly disputatious chatterers connected with philosophical societies and schools, men both learned and the unlearned everywhere, farmers in the field, townsmen in the towns. Admittedly, our writers are few in number, but this was quite proper, lest their writings, so precious from a religious viewpoint, seem cheap by their very abundance. On the other hand, they are numerous enough to make their perfect agreement a thing to marvel at. Granted that there is a more copious literary legacy in philosophy, a man still would be hard put to find, in all this abundance, any philosophers in agreement on everything they have taught—a proposition, however, which I cannot take time to prove in this work.

Has any one founder of a philosophical school become so solidly accepted in the demon-adoring city[1] that those with different or diametrically opposed doctrines have been forthwith rejected? Is it not a fact that in Athens the Epicureans and Stoics were equally admired, although the former taught that the gods took no interest in human affairs, while the latter taught that the gods constantly governed, guarded, and guided them? These are mutually exclusive opinions. Anaxagoras was condemned for saying that the sun is merely a burning stone and not a god at all. I wonder why, since Epicurus flourished gloriously in the same city and went unmolested, although he claimed that neither the sun nor any of the stars is divine, and that neither Jupiter nor any god at all dwells in the world to hear the prayers and supplications of humankind. Is it not a fact that Aristippus placed the highest good in bodily pleasures, while Antisthenes maintained that only moral virtue can make man happy—

1 . . . *in hac daemonicola civitate adprobatus.*

both of them in Athens? Were not both of them Socratics of the first rank? Yet they found life's very meaning in such wholly irreconcilable goals. Did not Aristippus teach that a wise man should keep clear of public office and Antisthenes that he should devote himself to it? And both of them went around gathering in followers to promote their ideas.

In Athens in those days the philosophers went milling about with their hangers-on, in broad daylight, here and there, now in the world-renowned Portico, now in the schools, now in little gardens, in every species of public and private place, each one belligerently propounding his own persuasions—some saying that there is only one world, some saying that it began, others, that it had no beginning; some saying it will come to an end, others that it will go on forever; some saying that the world is ruled by divine intelligence, others, that it is driven by fortuitous chance. With respect to the soul, some say it is immortal, others, that it is mortal; of those defending immortality, some say that the soul will turn up again in a beast, others, no such thing; of those defending mortality, some say the soul will die shortly after the body, others, that it will live on after the body; of these, some say that it will survive for a little while, others, for rather a long while, though not forever. With respect to the identity of the highest good, some put it in the body; others, in the mind; still others, in both at the same time; still others drag in extrinsic goods and add them to the body and mind. With respect to the validity of sense experience, some say that the senses are always to be trusted; others, not in every instance; still others, never.

Tell me, has any people, senate, or person with any power or authority in the ungodly city[2] ever bothered to examine these and the other almost innumerable results of philosoph-

2 . . . *quis umquam populus, quis senatus, quae potestas vel dignitas publica inpiae civitatis.*

ical wrangling with a view to approve and accept certain fixed principles and to condemn and reject all contentions to the contrary? Is it not the case, rather, that the ungodly city has, without the smallest degree of critical discrimination, taken all these scrapping ideas from here, there, and everywhere, clutching them in pell-mell confusion to her bosom? Yet, these philosophers were not discussing such relatively indifferent matters as agriculture, architecture, or economics.[3] They were holding forth on the deepest issues of all, the things that have to do with whether mankind is to live in happiness or in utter wretchedness.

Granted that some of the things these philosophers said are true, still, untruth was taught with equal license. No wonder, then, that this earthly city has been given the symbolic name of Babylon, for Babylon means confusion, as I remember having already remarked. Actually, her diabolical king does not care a straw how many contradictory opinions she harbors or how her people squabble over them, so long as he goes on in possession of them and all their errors—a tyranny they deserve by reason of their enormous and manifold ungodliness.

How differently has that other race, that other commonwealth of men, that other City, the people of Israel, to whom was entrusted the word of God, managed matters! No broad-minded, muddle-headed mixing of true prophets with false prophets there! They have recognized and held as the true-speaking authors of Holy Writ only those who are in perfect harmony with one another. These writers are for them their philosophers, that is, their lovers of wisdom, their sages, their theologians, their prophets, their teachers of good living and right believing—all in one. They know that if they think and live according to what these men taught, they are thinking and living according to God—who spoke through

3 . . . *non de agris et domibus vel quacumque pecuniaria ratione.*

the inspiried writers—and not according to man. They know that when these writers forbid sacrilege, God Himself forbids it. When they say, 'Honor thy father and thy mother; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal,'[4] and the rest, they recognize these for God's commands—not human mouthings, but divine revelations.[5]

Certain philosophers, it is true, did get a glimpse of the truth amid the fog of their own fallacies and did try to build it up to solid conviction and persuasiveness by means of carefully worked-out argumentation—such truths, for example, as God's creation of the world, His providential governance of it, the excellence of virtue, of patriotism, of loyalty in friendship, of good works and all other things pertaining to morality. They saw these things even when they did not know to what final end, or how, they were to be referred. But in the City of God these truths are found in the words of the Prophets—God's words, even though spoken by men. And they were not driven into her people's heads amid the tumult of twisting and turning argumentation, but simply delivered to them.[6] And those who heard them trembled, for they knew that if they despised them they were despising not the wisdom of man, but the word of God.

Chapter 42

Even one of the Ptolomies, kings of Egypt, strove to possess and become acquainted with the Holy Scriptures. Here is the story of how Egypt first came to have this dynasty of kings.

Alexander of Macedon, surnamed the Great, in an ex-

4 Exod. 20.12-15.

5 . . . *non haec ora humana, sed oracula divina fuderunt.*

6 . . . *populo commendata sunt, non argumentationum concertationibus inculcata.*

tremely brief but absolutely breath-taking show of power,[1] conquered all of Asia—indeed, nearly the whole world—sometimes by using armed aggression, at other times by intimidation. While he was subduing the East, he marched into Judea and took possession. After his death,[2] his higher officers, realizing they would not be able to rule, jointly and without conflict, such a gigantic empire, chose to carve it up—or, rather, to cut it to pieces, for their wars were to bring it nothing but destruction and dissolution.

Hereupon, Egypt began to be ruled by Ptolomies, of whom the first, a son of Lagus, brought into Egypt many slave laborers from Judea. His successor, the second Ptolemy, called Philadelphus, emancipated and repatriated all of them. What is more, he sent royal gifts to God's Temple in Jerusalem, begging meanwhile from Eleazar, who was the high priest, copies of the sacred Scriptures which, he had heard, were divinely inspired. The king was, he said, most eager to have a copy for the magnificent library he had built.

When Eleazar had sent him copies in Hebrew, the king then requested that he send him translators. Six men from each of the twelve tribes, seventy-two in all, men deeply versed in both Hebrew and Greek, were appointed. Thus, the translation they made is by prevailing custom called the Septuagint.

Tradition tells the following story.[3] To test their trustworthiness, Ptolemy had them tackle this task, each in solitary confinement. When they had finished, it was discovered that in their versions they had arrived at a wonderful, indeed a stupendous and obviously divinely inspired, unanimity in their choice of words; that they were in agreement in each

1 . . . *mirificentissimam minimeque diuturnam potentiam.*
2 323 B.C.
3 The story goes back to the so-called Letter of Aristeas, which modern scholars regard as spurious.

word (at least so far as meaning and equivalent value are concerned), and in the order of the words they chose. All gave one translation as if there were but one translator, because, in truth, the one Holy Spirit was at work in all. God gave them this marvelous gift so that the authorship of the Scriptures would seem to the Gentiles divine and not human, and so that in time they would believe in and profit by them. We have lived to see this realized.

Chapter 43

There have, of course, been other translations of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. We have versions by Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and an anonymous translation which is known simply as the 'fifth edition.' Nevertheless, the Church has adopted the Septuagint as if it were the only translation. Indeed, Greek-speaking Christians use it so generally that many of them do not even know that the others exist. From the Septuagint a Latin translation has been made, and this is the one which the Latin churches use. This is still the case despite the fact that in our own day the priest Jerome, a great scholar and master of all three tongues, has made a translation into Latin, not from Greek but directly from the original Hebrew.[1] The Jews admit that his highly learned labor is a faithful and accurate version, and claim, moreover, that the seventy translators made a great many mistakes in their version. Christ's Church, however, thinks it inadvisable to choose the authority of any one man as against the authority of so many men—men hand-picked, too, by the high priest Eleazar for this specific task.[2] For, even supposing that they were not inspired by one divine

1 The so-called Vulgate, which was begun in 390 and finished in 405.
2 The Catholic Church has long since accepted the Vulgate as official.

Spirit, but that, after the manner of scholars, the Seventy merely collated their versions in a purely human way and agreed on a commonly approved text, still, I say, no single translator should be ranked ahead of so many.

The truth is that there shone out from the Seventy so tremendous a miracle of divine intervention that anyone translating the Scriptures from the Hebrew into any other language will, if he is a faithful translator, agree with the Septuagint; if not, we must still believe that there is some deep revealed meaning in the Septuagint. For, the same Spirit who inspired the original Prophets as they wrote was no less present to the Seventy as they translated what the Prophets had written. And this Spirit, with divine authority, could say, through the translators, something different from what He had said through the original Prophets—just as, though these Prophets had the two meanings in mind, both were inspired by the Spirit. Besides, the Holy Spirit can say the same thing in two different ways, so long as the same meaning, in different words, is clear to anyone who reads with understanding. The Spirit, too, could omit certain things and add others, to make it clear that in the translators' work there was no question of their being bound to a purely human, word-for-word, slavish transcription, but only to the divine power which filled and mastered their minds.

Many have felt, of course, that the Greek manuscripts of the Septuagint need emendations by comparison with the Hebrew, but they did not presume to leave passages out of the former merely because they were not to be found in the latter. They were content to add to the Septuagint passages lacking there but present in the Hebrew, and they marked the beginning of such verses with star-shaped signs, called asterisks, while passages found in the Septuagint but missing in the Hebrew original were marked with short horizontal

lines such as are used in writing fractions.[3] Many manuscripts with these critical signs—not only in Greek but in Latin, too—are in wide circulation. So much for additions and omissions. With respect to other matters, that is, things expressed differently, whether they yield different meanings not wholly beyond harmonization, or the self-same meaning in synonyms—such passages cannot be recognized except by comparing both texts.

At any rate, if in reading the Scriptures we keep an eye, as we ought, only to what the Spirit of God spoke by the lips of men, we will conclude, in the case of something in the Hebrew which is missing in the Septuagint, that the Spirit elected to say this by the lips of the original Prophets and not by the lips of their translators. Conversely, in the case of something present in the Septuagint and missing in the original, we will conclude that the Spirit chose to say this particular thing by the lips of the Seventy rather than by the lips of the original Prophets, thus making it clear that all of them were inspired.

Not otherwise did the Spirit speak, as He willed, certain things through Isaias, others through Jeremias, still others through this or that Prophet, or the self-same things in divers ways, now through this one, now through that. Whatever is found both in the original Hebrew and in the Septuagint, the one same Spirit chose to say through both; with this difference, however, that the former were inspired while prophesying, the latter were inspired while translating the original prophecy.[4] Just as the one Spirit of peace made the former say things both true and consistent, the same Spirit made the latter, without benefit of mutual consultation, speak all that they spoke as if by one mouth.

3 . . . *iacentibus virgulis, sicut scribuntur unciae, signaverunt.*
4 . . . *sed ita ut illi praecederent prophetando, isti sequerentur prophetice illos interpretando.*

Chapter 44

At this point some may say: How am I to know precisely what the Prophet Jonas said to the people of Ninive? Did he say: 'Yet three days and Ninive shall be destroyed,'[1] or 'yet forty days'? Anyone can see that this Prophet, sent to alarm the city with the threat of impending disaster, could not have said both at the same time. If doom was to come on the third day, then not on the fortieth; if on the fortieth, then surely not on the third.

Now, if I am asked which of these two things Jonas actually said, I would be inclined to accept the Hebrew reading: 'Yet forty days and Ninive shall be destroyed.' However, those who translated this passage so many centuries later were empowered to give the other reading so long as it was relevant and contributed to one and the same general meaning, although with a different symbolical purpose. In this way the translators could admonish the reader to rise above the historical fact and, while respecting the authority of both texts, look for those higher meanings which account for that particular historical incident's having been recorded in the first place.

It is true, of course, that the incidents described really happened in Ninive. But they symbolized something far beyond the narrow limits of that city, as did that other historical event, Jonas' three-day sojourn in the whale's belly, which prefigured the three-day sojourn in hell of Him who was the Lord of all the Prophets.

Accordingly, if we understand, as we ought, that the city of Ninive is a symbol of the Church of the Gentiles overturned by repentance to become unlike its former self, then, as a symbol of Christ who wrought this revolution, either the forty days or the three days would do—the forty days, be-

1 Jonas 3.4.

cause that was the exact span of His resurrected life with His disciples prior to His Ascension; the three days, because on the third day He rose from the dead. The translators who were themselves inspired wrote as they did to rouse from sleep any reader exclusively bent upon cleaving to the literal sense and to stir him to penetrate the deeper mystery involved. They say, as it were: In the 'forty days' seek Him in whom you will be able to find the 'three days'; you will find the former in His Ascension, the latter in His Resurrection. Because both mysteries could be with perfect aptness prefigured by either of the numbers, the same Spirit gave us both, one through the Prophet Jonas, the other through the seventy inspired translators.

To shun prolixity, I shall illustrate no further how the merely seeming discrepancies between the Septuagint and the Hebrew original[2] can be reconciled by right understanding. The Apostles themselves quoted inspired texts from both sources, and I, too, following in their footsteps as best I can, have decided to employ both as authoritative, because the authority of both is really one and the same divine authority.

But now I must take up, according to my powers, certain other matters that await treatment.

Chapter 45

There can be no question that the Jews began to decline in fortune as soon as they were deprived of their prophets. Yet, at this very period, after the return from the Babylonian captivity and the rebuilding of the Temple, they expected to be better off. The trouble was that it was only in terms of temporal hope that those materially minded people under-

2 . . . *ab Hebraica veritate.* The identical expression is used by St. Jerome to justify his procedure.

stood the prophecy of Aggeus: 'Great shall be the glory of the last house, greater far than that of the first.'[1] Yet, Aggeus himself had just shown that he was talking about the New Testament, for, in a clear promise of Christ, he said: 'And I will move all nations and the Desired of all nations shall come.'[2] In this passage, by the way, the Septuagint translators used their prophetic right to substitute another meaning more relevant to the Body than to the Head, to the Church than to Christ: 'The chosen of the Lord shall come from all nations,' that is, the men of whom Jesus Himself in the Gospel said: 'Many are called but few are chosen.'[3]

Out of just such chosen Gentiles, as out of living stones, God's house of the New Testament is built—a house more resplendent far than was the great Temple built by King Solomon and rebuilt after the captivity. And it was precisely to prevent the Jews from imagining that Aggeus' prophecy was fulfilled by the reconstruction of the Temple that, from then on, they were left without prophets and delivered over to much oppression at the hands of foreign rulers, including the Romans.

Soon after the Temple's restoration, Alexander came and conquered them. There was no destruction, it is true, but that was because the Jews did not dare to oppose him and decided to appease him by ready subjection. However, the glory of that house was no longer what it had been when the Jews were under their own kings. Alexander did, indeed, offer sacrifice in the Temple, but that was no sign of a genuine conversion to the worship of the true God. He merely thought, in his pagan indifference, that God should be worshiped along with the false divinities.

After Alexander's death, Ptolemy,[4] Lagus' son, carried off

1 Ag. 2.10.
2 Ag. 2.8.
3 Matt. 22.14.
4 Ptolemy I, Soter, governor of Egypt in 323 and king in 305 B.C.

many Jews as slaves into Egypt, but his successor, Ptolemy Philadelphus,[5] was very well disposed and repatriated them. It was by his initiative as I mentioned, that we came to have the Septuagint. Next, the Jews were crushed in the series of wars narrated in the Books of the Machabees, and finally subdued by the king of Alexandria known as Ptolemy Epiphanes. Antiochus,[6] king of Syria, persecuted them, forced them into idolatry, and filled the Temple itself with sacrilegious pagan superstitions. But, then, a magnificently dynamic leader appeared: Judas, called Machabeus, who drove out Antiochus' officers and cleaned the Temple from the contamination of all that idolatry.

Not long afterwards, a certain Alcimus managed to get himself named high priest—a very great abuse, because he was not descended from priestly stock. Almost fifty years later—fifty years in which they had some good fortune but not true peace—Aristobolus took the crown[7] and became the first king in their history to be both king and high priest at the same time. From the end of the Babylonian captivity and rebuilding of the Temple up to this coronation, the Jews had not had kings, but princes or leaders. A king, of course, can be spoken of as a prince, because of his primacy of political power, and as a leader, because of military leadership. It does not follow, however, that every leader or prince can be called a king. But Aristobolus was a king. He was succeeded by Alexander,[8] also king and high priest simultaneously, who is reputed to have been very cruel to his own people. After this man, his wife Alexandra[9] became queen of the Jews. From her day on, even greater misfortunes befell them.

5 285-246 B.C.
6 Antiochus IV (175-164 B.C.) declared Judaism illegal in 168 B.C.
7 104 B.C.
8 Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.).
9 76-67 B.C.

This queen's sons, Aristobolus[10] and Hircanus,[11] fighting each other for control, actually aroused the power of Rome against the people of Israel, for Hircanus asked Rome intervention against his brother.

(At this time, Rome had already conquered Africa and Greece and was holding sway as well over broad stretches of the earth in other regions. But she had become top-heavy, so to speak, and had begun to crack up under the weight of her own unwieldiness. She had passed through one crisis after another: first, internal seditions, then the social wars, then the civil wars soon after, and she had come out of these crises so broken up and exhausted that the term of her republic was at an end, to be followed by a return to the monarchy.)

To continue, Pompey, the renowned leader of the Roman people, brought an army into Judea and took possession of the city.[12] Then he threw open the gates of the Temple and penetrated even into the Holy of Holies where only the high priest was allowed to enter. This he did as a proud conqueror, not as a humble suppliant; he came not to pray, but to profane. Further, having announced his support of Hircanus as high priest, he made Antipater the civil adviser (called the procurator in those days) over the enslaved people, and carried off Aristobolus in chains. From that day on, the Jews were tributary to the Roman people.

Later on, Cassius went so far as to plunder the very Temple. A few years afterwards the Jews got, as they deserved, a foreigner for their king, Herod.[13] During his reign Christ was born. Both events marked the 'fullness of time' foretold by the prophetic Spirit through the lips of the

10 67-63 B.C.
11 63-40 B.C.
12 64 B.C.
13 Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.).

patriarch Jacob: 'The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, until he come that is to be sent, and he shall be the expectation of the Gentiles.'[14] This pledge had been made good, for the Jews had never lacked a Jewish ruler of some kind or other until the coming of this Herod, their first foreign king. Surely, then, the time had arrived for Him to come who was to make good the promise of a New Testament, that so he might be the awaited of the nations.

But the nations could not await His second coming (as we await His second coming—to judge in the brilliance of His power), unless they first believed in His first coming—as one to be judged in the lowliness of His sufferings.

Chapter 46

According to prophecy,[1] Christ was born in Bethlehem of Juda, at the time, as I said, when Herod was king in Judea. At Rome, the republic had given way to the empire, and the Emperor Caesar Augustus had established a world-wide peace.

Christ was born a visible man of a human virgin mother, but He was a hidden God because God was His Father. So the Prophet had foretold: 'Behold the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son; and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is, interpreted, God with us.'[2] To prove that He was God, Christ worked many miracles, some of which—as many as seemed necessary to establish His claim—are recorded in the Gospels. Of these miracles the very first was the marvelous manner of His birth; the very

14 Gen. 49.10.

1 Mich. 5.2.
2 Isa. 7.14; Matt.1.23.

last, His ascension into heaven in His body risen from the dead.

Despite all, the Jews who refused to believe that He was destined to die and to rise from the dead slew Him and were ravaged by the Romans worse than before, torn from their fatherland where foreigners were already lording it over them, and scattered over the whole earth—for they are now everywhere. And it is their own Scriptures that bear witness that it is not we who are the inventors of the prophecies touching Christ. That is why many of them, who pondered these prophecies before His passion and more especially after His Resurrection, have come to believe in Him, as was foretold: 'For if thy people, O Israel, shall be as the sand of the sea, a remnant of them shall be converted.'[3] But the rest have been blinded, as was also foretold: 'Let their table become as a snare before them, and a recompense, and a stumbling-block. Let their eyes be darkened that they see not; and their back bend thou down always.'[4] That is why when they refuse to believe in our Scriptures and read their own like blind men, they are fulfilling what their own Prophets foretold.

However, some of them may object that we Christians made up the non-Jewish prophecies concerning Christ which are circulating under the name of the Sibyl—or others under any other names. My answer is that we have no need of any others than the ones in our opponents' books, precisely because these enemies, who are scattered over the whole earth wherever the Church is expanding and who possess and preserve these books, are living witnesses, however reluctant, to the truth of our position. For, in the very psalms which they read there is a prophecy to this effect: 'He is my God. His mercy shall help me. My God has shown this to me in

3 Isa. 10.22.
4 Ps. 68.23,24.

the midst of my enemies. Slay them not lest they forget thy law. Scatter them in thy power.'[5] God has shown the grace of His mercy to His Church 'in the midst of her enemies,' for, as St. Paul says: 'By their offense salvation has come to the Gentiles.'[6]

Although they were conquered and oppressed by the Romans, God did not 'slay' them, that is, He did not destroy them as Jews. For, in that case, they would have forgotten and would have been useless as witnesses to what I am speaking of. Consequently, the first part of the prophecy, 'Slay them not lest they forget thy law,' is of small import without the rest, 'Scatter them.' For, if the Jews had remained bottled up in their own land with the evidence of their Scriptures and if they were not to be found everywhere, as the Church is, the Church would not then have them as ubiquitous witnesses of the ancient prophecies concerning Christ.

Chapter 47

So much, then, for the Jewish Prophets who have spoken of Christ. If there are any prophets, already known or likely to be discovered, who are outside of the Jewish race and whose prophecies are not reckoned canonical, anything I should have to say would be superfluous. However, the fact that there may be such prophets is worth mentioning, since it is not unreasonable to believe that there may have been men among other races to whom the mystery of Christ was revealed and who felt an impulse to proclaim what they knew. Such men need not have shared in the same grace which inspired the Hebrew Prophets, since their knowledge could have come through those bad angels who, as we know, openly

5 Ps. 58.11,12.
6 Rom. 11.11.

avowed Christ Incarnate even when the Jews failed to recognize Him.

I think that not even the Jews themselves will presume to maintain that no one save the descendants of Israel (after his older brother became reprobate) ever belonged to God. It is true, of course, that there was never any other prople properly called God's people except their own. But they cannot deny that in other races there have been some who belonged to the true Israelites, citizens of the supernal fatherland, one with them in a heavenly, if not in an earthly, communion. If they should deny this, there is a very simple refutation at hand in the person of that wonderful, holy man, Job. He was neither a native Jew, nor a proselyte, that is, an alien adopted into the people of Israel. He was descended of Idumean stock; he was born in Idumea; he died there; yet, Holy Writ accords him the praise of saying that no one of his contemporaries matched him for justice and piety.[1] Although the Chronicles do not inform us just when he lived, we can gather from his book that it was three generations later than Israel. Because of its unique importance, the Jews have adopted his book into their authoritative canon.

There is no doubt in my mind that Divine Providence gave us Job as an example to make us understand that there may have been other men among the pagan nations who lived according to God's law, pleased Him, and so belonged to the spiritual Jerusalem. Nevertheless, we must believe that no man received such graces save one to whom the one Mediator between God and man, the man Jesus Christ, was made known by heavenly revelation. His Incarnation was revealed to those ancient saints before the event, as it has been announced to us after the event, so that one and the same faith may bring all the predestined through Him into the City

1 Job 1.8.

of God, into the house and temple of God, to God Himself.

Yet, it will still be objected that Christians have made up all other prophecies (except the Jewish ones) which concern the grace of God as given through Jesus Christ. Hence, the only cogent way that is left for refuting any non-Christians who may argue this point (and for converting them, if they will do some straight thinking) is to produce the divinely inspired prophecies of Christ which are contained in the books of the Jews—the people who were torn away from their ancestral home and scattered over the whole earth and have thus furnished a witness to help the Church in its universal expansion.

Chapter 48

The house of God, the Church, is more glorious by far than was that first house, the Temple, built of wood, stone, precious metals, and other costly materials. And this is why the reconstruction of the Temple did not make good the prophecy of Aggeus. Indeed, the facts I reviewed just a moment ago bear witness that the Temple was never so glorious after its glory was overcast, first, by the cessation of all prophecy, and, secondly, by the gigantic calamities which befell the Jews themselves, including that final wholesale destruction of the city at the hands of the Romans.

Surely, the glory of the House of the New Testament is greater than that of the Old because it was built of better materials, namely, those living stones which are human beings renewed by faith and grace. Yet, precisely because Solomon's Temple was renovated—was made new—it was a prophetic symbol of the second Testament which is called New. Accordingly, we must understand the words God spoke by Aggeus' mouth, 'And I will give peace in that place,'[1] as refer-

1 Ag. 2.10.

ring to the place for which the Temple stood. Since the restored Temple signified the Church which Christ was to build, those words can mean only: 'I will give peace in that place (the Church) which this place (the rebuilt Temple) forefigures.' (All symbols seem in some way to personify the realities of which they are symbols. So, St. Paul says, 'The rock was Christ,'[2] because the rock in question symbolized Christ.)

Not, however, until the House of the New Testament receives its final consecration will its greater glory in relation to the house of the Old Testament be made perfectly clear. This will take place at the second coming of Him whom the Hebrew text calls 'The Desired of all nations.'[3] Obviously, His first coming was not desired of all nations, for unbelievers did not even know whom they should desire to come. In the end, too, as the Septuagint puts it with equal prophetic meaning: 'The chosen of the Lord shall come from all nations.' Then, truly, only the chosen shall come, those of whom St. Paul says: Even 'as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world.'[4]

I mean that the Master Builder who said: 'Many are called but few are chosen'[5] is not going to say that His House was built of those who were called, but who had to be cast out from the feast, but only of His chosen ones—and this House will fear no ruin. While time lasts, the reprobates, too, help to crowd our churches, but the winnowing fan will separate them from the elect on judgment's threshing-floor. It is their presence which prevents the glory of this House from shining as brightly as it will when all those who dwell in it are to dwell there forever.

2 1 Cor. 10.4.
3 Ag. 2.8.
4 Eph. 1.4.
5 Matt. 22.14.

Chapter 49

In this unfriendly world, in evil days like these, the Church through the lowliness she now endures is winning the sublime station she is to have in heaven. Meanwhile, the sting of fears and ache of tears, the vexatious toil and hazardous temptations, teach her to rejoice only in the healthy joy of hope. With so many sinners mingled with the saints, all caught in the single fishing net the Gospel mentions, this life on earth is like a sea in which good and bad fishes caught in a net swim about indistinguishably until the net is beached, and the bad ones are separated from the good. Only then does God so reign in the good, as in His temple, that He may be all in all.[1]

Accordingly, we recognize the fulfillment now of the Psalmist's words: 'I have declared and I have spoken, they are multiplied beyond numbering.'[2] This has been going on ever since Christ declared and spoke, first, by the lips of His precursor, John, and subsequently by His own: 'Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'[3] He chose disciples, whom He called Apostles, men of humble birth, undistinguished, unschooled in letters, so that, however great they might become in character and accomplishment, He would be their holiness and their success.[4] Among them He had one bad man, of whom He made good use to carry out the purposes of His passion and to set an example for His Church, how she should bear with bad men, too. To the degree that His physical presence was required, He sowed the seed of the holy Gospel, then suffered, died, and rose from the dead. Quite apart from the profound mystery of

1 1 Cor. 15.28.
2 Ps. 39.6.
3 Matt. 3.2.
4 . . . *ut quidquid magnum essent et facerent, ipse in eis esset et faceret.*

His blood shed for the remission of sins, He taught us by His passion what we should suffer for the Truth, and by His resurrection what we should hope for in eternity. He passed forty days on earth with His disciples, ascended into heaven, before their very eyes, and ten days later sent down the Holy Spirit.

When the promised Holy Spirit came down upon the faithful, each one of them was empowered to speak the languages of all nations—a very great miracle and a very greatly necessary one—to show that the Catholic Church was to be one throughout all nations and was so destined to speak in the tongues of all.

Chapter 50

The Church expanded from Jerusalem out, in accordance with the well-known prophecy: 'The Lord's commands shall go out from Sion, his word from Jerusalem,'[1] and with what our Lord said to His disciples who were marveling over His Resurrection from the dead: 'He opened their minds that they might understand the Scriptures, and said to them: Thus is it written; and thus the Christ should suffer, and should rise again from the dead on the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.'[2] This prediction was repeated when He answered their question about His second coming by saying: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates which the Father has fixed by his own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth.'[3]

It was only after many in Judea and Samaria had believed

1 Isa. 2.3.
2 Luke 24.45-47.
3 Acts 1.7,8.

that the disciples went out to other peoples to preach the Gospel, like lamps which the Lord had equipped with the wick of His word and lit with the light of the Holy Spirit.[4] For He had told them: 'Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul.' But they were so hotly fired with love that they did not feel this chilling fear. In this spirit the Gospel was preached throughout the whole world—to the accompaniment of horrendous persecutions, manifold torturings, and death of martyrs—by men who had seen and heard Christ before His passion and after His resurrection and by those who carried on where they left off. Meanwhile, God gave them solemn attestation by signs and wonders and various prodigies; and by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, too.

As a result, the Gentiles believed in Him who had died for their redemption and began, with Christian tenderness, to venerate the martyrs' blood—the very blood they had spilled in diabolical fury. Even the kings whose laws had depopulated the Church came to bow down before that saving Name, which their earlier savagery had tried to abolish from the earth, and even undertook to drive out the false gods for whose sake they had persecuted the worshipers of the true God.

Chapter 51

When the Devil saw the human race abandoning the temples of demons and marching happily forward in the name of the freedom-giving Mediator, he inspired heretics to oppose Christian teaching under cover of the Christian name as though their presence in the City of God could go unchallenged like the presence, in the city of confusion, of philosophers with wholly different and even contradictory opinions!

4 . . . *quos ipse sicut luminaria et aptaverat verbo et accenderat Spiritu sancto.*

Heretics are those who entertain in Christ's Church unsound and distorted ideas and stubbornly refuse, even when warned, to return to what is sound and right, to correct their contagious and death-dealing doctrines, but go on defending them. When they leave the Church they are ranked as enemies who try her patience. Even so, their evil-doing profits the loyal Catholic members of Christ's Body, for God makes good use of bad men, while 'for those who love God all things work together unto good.'[1] Actually, all foes of the Church, whether blinded by error or moved by malice, subserve her in some fashion. If they have power to do her physical harm, they develop her power to suffer; if they oppose her intellectually, they bring out her wisdom; since she must love even her enemies, her loving kindness is made manifest; and whether she has to deal with them in the persuasiveness of argument or the chastisement of law, they bring into play her power to do good.

So it is that the diabolical prince of the ungodly city is not allowed to harm the pilgrim City of God, even when he stirs up his tools and dupes against her. Beyond all doubt, Divine Providence sees to it that she has both some solace of prosperity that she may not be broken by adversity and some testing of adversity that she may not be weakened by prosperity. Thus, the one balances the other, as one can see from the words of the psalm, 'According to the multitude of sorrows in my heart, so thy consolations have gladdened my soul,'[2] and those of St. Paul: 'Rejoicing in hope, being patient in tribulation.'[3]

St. Paul also says: 'All who want to live piously in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.'[4] Persecution, therefore, will

1 Rom. 8.28.
2 Ps. 93.19.
3 Rom. 12.12.
4 2 Tim. 3.12.

never be lacking. For, when our enemies from without leave off raging and there ensues a span of tranquility—even of genuine tranquility and great consolation at least to the weak—we are not without enemies within, the many whose scandalous lives wound the hearts of the devout. These people bring discredit upon the Christian and Catholic name—a name so dear to 'all who want to live piously in Christ Jesus'—that they grieve bitterly to see their own brethren love it less than pious people should. There is that other heartache of seeing heretics, too, using the name and sacraments, the Scriptures and the Creed of genuine Christians. They realize how many would-be converts are driven into perplexed hesitancy because of heretical dissension, while the foul-mouthed find in heretics further pretext for cursing the Christian name, since these heretics at least call themselves Christian.

So it is that those who want to live piously in Christ must suffer the spiritual persecution of these and other aberrations in thought and morals, even when they are free from physical violence and vexation. This explains the verse: 'According to the multitude of sorrows in my heart'—there is no mention of the body. On the other hand, they recall the unchangeable, divine promise that no one of them can be lost. As St. Paul says: 'The Lord knows who are his,'[5] and 'For those whom he has foreknown he has also predestined to become conformed to the image of his son.'[6] And the psalm just cited goes on: 'Thy consolations have gladdened my soul.'

Yet, even the mental suffering which the devout undergo because of the lives of bad or pretended Christians is a source of spiritual profit because it flows from their charity, in virtue of which they would not have sinners be lost or go on blocking the salvation of others. Besides, the devout experi-

5 2 Tim. 2.19.
6 Rom. 8.29.

ence immense consolation when conversions flood the souls with a joy as great as the previous anguish on their account was excruciating.

So it falls out that in this world, in evil days like these, the Church walks onward like a wayfarer stricken by the world's hostility, but comforted by the mercy of God. Nor does this state of affairs date only from the days of Christ's and His Apostles' presence on earth. It was never any different from the days when the first just man, Abel, was slain by his ungodly brother. So it shall be until this world is no more.

Chapter 52

Consequently, I think that no one should rashly say or believe, as some have done or do, that the Church will undergo no more than the ten persecutions she has suffered, except the very last of all, Antichrist's, which will be number eleven. These ten persecutions are numbered as follows: first, Nero's, then those of Domitian, Trajan, Antoninus, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, and, tenth, that of Diocletian and Maximian. The theory is that the ten plagues of the Egyptians which occurred before the beginning of the exodus of God's people must be correlated with these ten Christian persecutions, and that the eleventh, namely, Antichrist's, is foreshadowed by the eleventh plague, namely, the drowning of the Egyptians in the Red Sea when they were hot on the trail of the Hebrews who passed over as if it were dry land.

I do not think, however, that what happened in Egypt was a prophetic prefiguration of the persecutions. I say this—despite the fact that those who think otherwise seem to have matched them, each with each, so nicely and ingeniously—because I can see here no prophetic spirit but mere human

guesswork, which occasionally hits the truth and just as often misses.

What, for instance, are those who hold this theory going to say about our Lord's crucifixion? Was that not a persecution and, if so, what number will they give it? If they answer that we should omit this one, since it was only the singling out and slaying of the Head, and should begin counting with the persecutions leveled against the Body, then what do they plan to do with the persecution launched, after our Lord's Ascension, in Jerusalem: in which Stephen was stoned; John's brother, James, beheaded; Peter, imprisoned, sentenced to death, and then freed by an angel; the brethren, scattered in flight from Jerusalem; and Saul, later on the Apostle Paul, violently attacked the Church? What are they going to say about St. Paul's own sufferings, in Judea and and wherever he preached Christ so fervently? For, in preaching the faith he had formerly fought, he received in return something of what he had dealt out to others.

Why, too, must they begin counting with Nero, since the Church grew and survived up to Nero's day only in the midst of frightful persecutions which I need not here recall? Possibly they think that we should include only royal persecutions? In such an arrangement, what about Herod? He was a king, and he let loose a mighty persecution—after the Ascension, too. What about Julian the Apostate? His persecution is not included among the ten. Would they contend that his disqualifying of all Christian teachers and students engaged in liberal education was not a form of persecution? It was under Julian that Valentinian the Elder, who was next but one in the imperial succession, was stripped of his military rank for professing the Christian faith. Or take just one detail of the projected persecution in Antioch. A great many Christians were seized for the torture. The first, a young man of great faith and courage, was tortured for a whole day. When Julian

heard him singing while being torn with claws and other instruments of torture, he was so staggered by this free and merry spirit that his hair fairly stood on end, and he feared the even more unregal embarrassment the others might cause him.[1]

Further, in our own day, Valens, the Arian brother of the Valentinian just mentioned, laid waste the Church in the East in a great persecution. What kind of thinking is it, anyhow, which loses sight of the fact that, as the Church grows and flourishes throughout the world, she may be hounded by some rulers in certain sections while other sections are at peace? Or, possibly, we should not count the brutal persecution visited upon Gothic Christians in their own land by their own king, since the people were all Catholics, several of whom won the martyr's crown? I have heard about this one from some of the brethren who were children there at the time and who can recall without hesitation all the details of which they were witnesses.

What about conditions in Persia in our time? Did not the Christians there have such a raging persecution (if, indeed, it is over yet) that many of them fled as refugees even as far as the Roman towns? The more I ponder facts like these, the more I think we should abstain from trying to define the number of persecutions destined for the Church. And I think it no less rash to attempt fortelling what further persecutions may come from rulers. The only one that will come with absolute certainty is the very last, that of Antichrist, on which subject no Christian can entertain any doubt. So, I leave this question of future persecutions in a state of neutral indecision, neither building up nor tearing down either side, content to remind all to refrain from venturesome presumption.

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1 . . . *et in ceteris deformius erubescere timuisset.*

Chapter 53

This much is certain, that, with His second coming, Jesus Himself will quench the fires of that final persecution which will be Antichrist's. For it is written: 'He will slay him with the breath of His mouth, and He will destroy him with the brightness of His coming.'[1]

At this point people usually inquire: When will all this happen? A most unreasonable question, for, if it were good for us to know the answer, the Master, God Himself, would have told His disciples when they asked Him. When they had Him face to face, they did not receive such news in silence, either, but plainly asked Him: 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' And He replied: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates which the Father has fixed by his own authority'[2]—an answer, it should be noted, given to men who had not sought to know the exact hour, or day, or year, but only the general time of this fulfillment. Obviously, then, it is a waste of effort for us to attempt counting the precise number of years which this world has yet to go, since we know from the mouth of Truth that it is none of our business.

Not to be put off, however, some men have presumed to say that the complement of years between our Lord's Ascension and His second coming will be 400, others, 500, others, as high as 1,000. It would be both a lengthy and pointless task to show how each one tries to bolster up his opinion. They fall back on human guesswork, you may be sure, for the canonical Scriptures afford them nothing clearcut in the way of supporting evidence.

Suffice it to say that the fingers of all such calculators were slackened by Him who imposed silence with the words: 'It is

1 2 Thess. 2.8.
2 Acts 1.6,7.

not for you to know the times or dates which the Father has fixed by his own authority.'

This text, being taken from the New Testament, has, of course, done nothing to stop the votaries of the false gods from pretending to define, on the basis of reponses from the demon gods whom they adore, just how long the Christian religion was destined to endure. When these people had to face the fact that many gigantic persecutions, instead of destroying the faith, had made it grow beyond belief, they trumped up some Greek verses or other, in the form of an oracle's effusion to a questing client, to make Christ out blameless in the propagation of this criminally sacrilegious sect. The verses added that it was Peter who contrived by black magic to have Christ's name adored, and that this farce would go on for 365 years, whereupon it would end abruptly.

O these learned men! O these cultivated intelligences! They refuse to believe in Christ, yet gladly believe such preposterous things about Christ as that, while He was not the master magician to his pupil Peter and was guileless while Peter alone was the villain, Peter yet chose to promote the worship of Christ's name rather than of his own, and did this by means of the dark arts he knew, the efforts he made, the perils he underwent and, even, the shedding of his own blood! If Peter made the world love Christ by means of magic, by what innocent means did Christ make Peter love Him to this extent?

Let them answer this question in their own hearts. And let them understand, also, if they can, that heavenly grace alone made the world love Christ, for the sake of everlasting life, the very same grace which made Peter, too, love Christ and, looking to Him for everlasting life, suffer for His name's sake the brief death of the body.

And, by the way, what kind of gods are these that can foretell things, yet cannot prevent their happening? Do they

have to collapse completely in the face of one magician and his one act of black magic in killing, as they claim a year-old body, cutting him up and then burying him with abominable ceremonies so as to persuade the god to allow a religion hostile to them to wax big and strong over so long a period, triumph over the horrendous savagery of so many persecutions —and not by resisting, but by suffering them—and, finally, achieve the overthrow of their own statues, temples, rites, and oracles? What kind of god was it—certainly not ours—who was so drawn or driven by Peter's monstrous crime as to grant all this success? For, so the verses say, Peter's magic imposed this on a god, not on any demon. Well, that is the kind of god people have who refuse to have Christ!

Chapter 54

I would produce a great deal more in the way of refutation had not the fatal year, foretold by fraudulent prophecy, and taken on faith by the empty-headed, already elapsed. Several years ago, the religion of Christ, which was established by Himself and His Apostles, had already lasted 365 years. Why, then, seek any further for arguments to scotch that pagan lie? Not to take Christ's birth as the starting point (because in infancy and boyhood He had no disciples), Christian faith and worship certainly became public knowledge when He personally appeared and began to have disciples, after He was baptized by John in the Jordan. This, in fact, is what is referred to in the prophecy concerning Him: 'He shall rule from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.'[1]

However, for the sake of this debate, it is best to begin with the Resurrection. He was to suffer, die, and rise from the dead before the content of faith could receive its definitive

1 Ps. 71.8.

form. This is what St. Paul had in mind when he said to the Athenians: 'He calls upon all men everywhere to repent; inasmuch as he had fixed a day on which he will judge the world with justice by a man whom he has appointed, in whom he had *defined* faith for all by raising him from the dead.'[2] It was after the Resurrection, too, that the Holy Spirit was to be given in that city from which, as had been ordained, the second Law, the New Testament, was first to be proclaimed. The first Law, the Old Testament, had come out of Mount Sinai by the lips of Moses; but of the Law Christ came to give it was foretold: 'The law shall come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.'[3] This explains why Christ ordered repentance to be preached in His name among all peoples, but beginning in Jerusalem. It was there that the worship of this name arose when men were called upon to believe in Jesus Christ crucified and risen from the dead. It was there that this faith had such an electrifying introduction[4] that several thousands of men turned to Christ with astonishing enthusiasm, sold what they had to give to the poor, embraced voluntary poverty with holy determination and burning love, and steeled themselves, in the midst of enraged and bloodthirsty Jews, to battle unto death for the truth—not with weapons of war, but with the more potent weapon of patient suffering.[5] If this was the result of divine power, rather than of black magic, why should anyone hestitate to believe that the same divine power may have operated in the in the same way throughout the rest of the world? If, on the other hand, one persists in maintaining that Peter must already have performed his act of sorcery for so many men in Jerusalem to have been stirred to worship Christ's name—men who had either caught and crucified Him or had

2 Acts 17.30,31.
3 Isa. 2.3.
4 . . . *tam insignibus initiis incanduit.*
5 . . . *non armata potentia, sed potentiore patientia.*

derided Him when He was crucified—then the year of these conversions is the proper starting point, and we must ask when the 365 years were up.

Very well. Now, Christ died in the year when the Gemini were consuls, on the twenty-fifth day of March. He rose from the dead on the third day, as the Apostles could prove from the witness with their own eyes. After forty days He ascended into heaven. Ten days later, on the fiftieth day after His resurrection, he sent down the Holy Spirit. On that day 3,000 men believed when the Apostles preached to them. It was on that day that the Christian religion began, and it was by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, as we believe and the facts prove, and not by means of Peter's black magic, as impious foolishness has thought or feigned to think. A short time afterwards, 5,000 more men were converted upon the occasion of Peter's working a miracle upon a beggar, lame from birth, who used to be carried to the temple gate to get alms. In the name of Jesus Christ this man leaped to his feet cured. And so, as time went by, the Church grew by one influx after another of believers.

Thus, we can establish the very day on which the first year of Christianity began, namely, the fifteenth of May, the day when the Holy Spirit came down. Starting there and counting the consuls, we find that the 365 years were over on May 15, during the consulate of Honorius and Eutychianus.[6]

Now, in the following year, during the consulate of Manlius Theodorus, when, according to that demonic oracle or human fabrication, there ought to have been no Christianity left, I need not investigate how things were faring in other parts of the world, but I do know what happened in the illustrious city of Carthage in Africa. There, on March 31, Gaudentius and Jovius, officers of the Emperor Honorius, destroyed the temples of the false gods and smashed their statues.

6 A.D. 395.

Almost thirty years[7] have gone by since that day and anyone can see how Christianity has grown, especially by the conversion of those who were held back from the faith because they took that prophecy to be true. When the fated number of years had elapsed, however, they realized how senseless and ridiculous it was.

We who are Christians in name and in deed do not believe in Peter, but in Him in whom Peter believed; we have been drawn to Christ by Peter's exhortations, not drugged by his incantations; we have been helped by his services, not hoodwinked by his sorceries.[8] Christ was Peter's teacher in that faith which leads to everlasting life. The same Christ is our teacher, too.

Let me, at long last, end this Book. I have described in such detail as I judged adequate the historical course of the two cities, the heavenly and earthly, intermingled as they have been from the beginning and are to be until the end of time. The earthly one has made for herself, according to her heart's desire, false gods out of any sources at all, even out of human beings, that she might adore them with sacrifices. The heavenly one, on the other hand, living like a wayfarer in this world, makes no false gods for herself. On the contrary, she herself is made by the true God that she may be herself a true sacrifice to Him.

Both of these cities alike make use of temporal goods and both are equally afflicted by temporal ills—but how different they are in faith, how dissimilar in hope, how unlike in love![9] This will go on until they are to be separated in the Last Judgment, when each shall achieve its appointed end—an end which will have no end.

I must undertake now to treat of those ends.

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7 Thus, St. Augustine was finishing Book XVIII in 425.

8 . . . *aedificati sermonibus, non carminibus venenati; nec decepti maleficiis, sed beneficiis eius adiuti.*

9 . . . *diversa fide, diversa spe, diverso amore.*

BOOK NINETEEN

Chapter 1

FROM THIS POINT ON, I see that I must discuss the appointed ends of the two cities of earth and of heaven. But first I must set forth, within the limits which my work allows, the kind of philosophical efforts men have made in their search for happiness amid the sorrows of this mortal life. My purpose is, first, to point out the difference between their hollow aspirations and the holy assurances which God has given us; second, to make clear what is meant by the true beatitude which He will grant. For this latter purpose I shall appeal not only to divine Revelation but to such natural reasoning as will appeal to those who do not share our faith.

In regard to what is supremely good and supremely evil, philosophers have taken many different stands—all striving with the highest earnestness to determine what it is that makes men happy. By definition, our supreme end is that good which is sought for its own sake, and on account of which all other goods are sought. In the same way, the supreme evil is that on account of which other evils are

avoided, whereas it is to be avoided on its own account. For the moment, we shall say that the ultimate good is not so much a good to end all goods as, rather, one by which goodness reaches its fullest consummation. In the same way, the ultimate evil is not one in which evil comes to an end, but the one in which evil reaches the very height of harm.[1] It is in this sense that the greatest good and the worst evil are called ends or ultimates.

To determine what these ultimates are and then, in this life, to obtain the supreme good and avoid the supreme evil—such has been the aim and effort of all who have professed a zeal for wisdom in this world of shadows. Of course, for all their aberrations, the nature of man has set limits to men's deviations from the right track, seeing that the ultimate good and evil must be found either in the soul, or in the body, or in both.[2] It was under these three general heads that Marcus Varro, in his work, *On Philosophy,* listed the immense variety of opinions which he examined with such careful and subtle scrutiny; he remarked that, by the application of various differentiating notes, he could easily reach no less than 288 possible species of opinions—not, of course, that there were that many schools in existence.

For the purpose of my exposition, I shall begin with an observation of Varro in the work just mentioned, namely, that there are four ends which men naturally pursue, irrespective of any teacher, formal education, or training in that purposeful art of living which we call virtue, and which is indubitably a matter of learning. These ends are: first, pleasure aroused by the pleasant stirring of our bodily senses; second, calm, in the sense of the absence of all bodily vexation; third, that com-

1 *Finem boni . . . dicimus, non quo consumatur ut non sit, sed quo perficiatur ut plenum sit . . . finem mali non quo esse desinat, quo usque nocendo perducat.*

2 Cf. above, 8.1.

bination of pleasure and serenity which Epicurus called, in single word, pleasure; fourth, the primary demands of nature[3] which include, besides pleasure and calm, such needs of our body as wholeness, health, security, and such needs of our soul as man's innate spiritual powers, whether great or small. These four—pleasure, serenity, their combination, and the primary exigencies of nature—are so much a part of us that it is either on their account that we pursue the virtue which education brings us; or else they are sought on account of virtue; or else these four and virtue are sought, each on its own account. Hence, we get twelve schools of thought, since each of the four ends can be looked at in three ways. A single illustration will make this whole matter clear.

Take bodily pleasure. This can be either subordinated or preferred or merely joined to virtue in the soul. Hence, we get three different schools of thought. Pleasure is subordinate to virtue when it is a means to the practice of virtue. For example, it is a part of virtue to live in one's native land and to beget children for the sake of the fatherland—neither of which is possible without bodily pleasure, since we cannot eat to live without pleasure nor, without pleasure, take the means to propagate a family. On the other hand, when pleasure is preferred to virtue, it is sought for its own sake and virtue is pursued as a means for the sake of pleasure. This is to say that virtue makes no effort save to procure or to make secure some bodily pleasure. Strange life, indeed, where pleasure is the mistress and virtue is the handmaid! No such handmaid could, in fact, be called a virtue; yet this shameless and revolting theory has found philosophers to back and defend it.

Pleasure is combined with virtue when each is sought for itself and neither for the other. Thus, just as pleasure is subordinated to, or preferred to, or co-cordinated with, virtue

3 *Primigenia.*

—making three schools—so calm, a combination of pleasure and calm, and the primary needs of nature can each be taken as a criterion to produce three distinct schools. According to the variety of human opinions, these ends are sometimes subordinated to, sometimes preferred to, and sometimes made co-ordinate with, virtue; thus, the number of schools becomes twelve. But this number, in turn, is doubled the moment we introduce another distinction, that between individual and social life; for, anyone who follows one or other of the twelve schools mentioned above does so either for himself alone, or because of some neighbor for whom he ought to wish what he wishes for himself. Hence, there are twelve schools of those who hold that each of the opinions is to be held for purely personal reasons, and a second twelve made up of those who think they should philosophize in this way or that, not merely with a view to their own personal living, but because of others whose good they seek as they seek their own. And these twenty-four schools become twice as many, namely, forty-eight, by introducing a distinction from the philosophy of the New Academy;[4] for, each of the twenty-four opinions can be held and defended as certain (as the Stoics defended as certain their opinion that the good which makes a man happy is to be found solely in the virtue of the soul), or each of them can be held as being uncertain (much as the members of the New Academy defended their view merely as a probability). Thus, there are twenty-four schools of those who hold their views as certain because they are true, and another twenty-four made up of those who think they should follow their views because they seem probable, although not certain.

Again, each of these forty-eight schools may be followed either after the manner of the Cynics, or after the manner of other philosophers; and by this distinction the forty-eight

4 Or, as we would say today, Middle Academy.

becomes ninety-six. Moreover, any of these opinions can be so followed and defended either with a view to the life of contemplative leisure (as in the case of those who would and could devote all their time to the study of the truth), or with a view to an active life (as in the case of those who, though philosophers, are actually engaged in the administration of State affairs or other human enterprises), or, finally with a view to a mixed life, both active and contemplative (as in the case of those who find time to alternate periods of scholarly leisure with periods of necessary business). By such differences the number of the schools can be tripled and brought up to 288.

All this is in Varro's book, but I have summarized what he says as clearly as I could in language of my own. Varro goes on to refute all the other views save the one he thinks to be the view of the Old Academy, as founded by Plato and adhered to up to the time of Polemon, the fourth leader of the school. It seemed to Varro that this school held their views as certain, and thus he distinguishes it from the New Academy (the kind of philosophy that began with Arcesilaus, the successor of Polemon, according to which everything is open to doubt). It seemed to Varro that the school of the Old Academy was free from all doubt and all error. Just how he reached these conclusions it would take me too long to show in detail. I cannot, however, forego all discussion of this matter.

What Varro first does is to remove all those distinguishing marks which merely multiply the number of schools but fail to include what is essential, namely, the supreme good. For, he thinks that no school of philosophy is worthy of the name unless it differs from others in what it regards as the ultimate good and the ultimate evil. The reason for this is that no one has any right to philosophize except with a view to happiness. Now, what makes a man happy is the supreme good. Hence,

there is no reason for philosophizing apart from the supreme good. From this it follows that no school of philosophy is properly so called unless its search is for the supreme good.

Take the matter of social life. Is it to be entered upon by a philosopher as the supreme good by which he is both rendered happy and also seeks and procures his neighbor's good as he does his own, or should he cultivate it purely out of consideration for his own happiness? When we raise these questions we do not touch the matter of the supreme good itself, but merely ask whether or not our neighbor is to be reckoned as a sharer in this good on our account or on account of the neighbor himself, in the sense that we rejoice in his good as we do in our own.

So, too, with the question of the New Academy and its universal skepticism. When we ask whether all those matters which are the concern of philosophy are to be considered doubtful or whether we should consider them certain as other philosophers do, there is no question here as to what is to be sought as the supreme good, but merely whether or not we should have doubts as to the reality of the supreme good which we think should be pursued. In plain words, the question here is whether the person pursuing the supreme good should so pursue it as to call it a real good, or pursue it in such wise that he is willing to say that it is probably an objective good, although it may not be so—one and the same good, meanwhile, being pursued in both cases.

So, too, there is the distinction drawn from the dress and ways of the Cynics. Here the question raised is not the nature of the supreme good. The question is whether a person pursuing the supreme good—whatever he happens to think is the good that is both true and to be pursued—should pursue it in the dress and ways of the Cynics.

Finally, there have been philosophers who pursued quite different ends as being ultimates—some, virtue; others, pleas-

ure—yet observed the idiosyncrasies of life that gave the Cynics their name. Hence, whatever it was that distinguished the Cynics from other philosophers, certainly it had nothing to do with choosing and holding to a good which might make them happy. For, if manners had anything to do with this matter, then similarity of manners would compel men to pursue the same end, and any variety would make this impossible.

Chapter 2

To return to the three types of living noted above, namely, the life of inactivity (not of mere idleness, of course, but of contemplation and scholarly search for the truth), the life of activity in human affairs, and the life of action tempered by contemplation—if one asks which of these is to be chosen, this does not raise the issue of the supreme good, but merely asks which of the three makes it easy or difficult to reach or retain what is supremely good. For, as soon as a man reaches the ultimate good, this at once makes him happy. Now, no one is immediately happy the moment he enjoys the leisure of a literary life, or the activity of public life, or begins to alternate one with the other. In point of fact, it is possible for many men to live in any of these three estates, yet to take the wrong road to the final good which makes men happy.

It follows that the question of the ultimates in good and evil, which divide the schools of philosophers, must be distinguished from such other matters as social life, Academic doubt, the dress and food of the Cynics, the three lives of contemplation, administration, and the mixture of both. There is no question, in these latter discussions, of any ultimate in either good or evil. Now, it was by introducing these four differentiating notes (namely, social life, Academic

skepticism, the Cynics' way of life, and the three types of human living) that Varro distinguished 288 possible schools of philosophy—and even more might be added. But the moment he removes all those matters which do not touch the question of the supreme good and, therefore, cannot differentiate schools of philosophy properly so called, Varro is back to the twelve groups whose sole search is for that good which when obtained makes a man happy. He seeks to show that one of these is right and all the others wrong. Merely by removing the question of the threefold kind of life, the number is reduced by two thirds from 288 to ninety-six. Next, by disregarding the question about the Cynics, the ninety-six is cut in two and becomes forty-eight. And once we remove the question about the Skeptics, we have another subtraction of one half, and are left with twenty-four. Let the question of social life be taken away and we are left with the twelve which became twenty-four only by introducing this distinction. As for these twelve, there is no reason why they should not all be reckoned as schools, since the central preoccupation of each is with the question of the ultimate goods and evils —the evils, of course, being the contraries of the goods. However, the number twelve was reached by multiplying by three the four goods, pleasure, repose, their combination, and the primary demands of nature which Varro calls the *primigenia*. The number four was tripled to become twelve schools on the basis of the relations of the goods to virtue: sometimes they are subordinated, as when they are apparently pursued not for themselves but as a means to virtue; sometimes they are put before virtue, on the theory that virtue is not its own end, but is merely a necessary means if the four goods are to be obtained and retained; sometimes they are co-ordinated, in the view that both virtue and the four goods are to be pursued each for its own sake. However, even from the four ends, three of them—

namely, pleasure, calm and a combination of pleasure and calm—are removed by Varro, not on the ground that they are bad, but because pleasure and calm are included in the primary satisfactions of nature. And, of course, since the *primigenia* include not merely pleasure and calm but other things, too, there is no need to add a combination of pleasure and calm to make a third thing distinguished from the search of pleasure and calm taken singly.

Thus, Varro is left with the problem of making a careful selection of one of the three schools, since true reason can allow no more than one of differing opinions to be right, whether in the matter of these three or of any others; and this we shall see later. For the moment I shall discuss, as briefly and clearly as I can, how Varro makes his selection of one of the three theories: either the primary needs of nature are to be sought for the sake of virtue; or virtue, for their sake; or nature and virtue, each for its own sake.

Chapter 3

Varro argues as follows in deciding which of the three theories is true and therefore to be embraced. First of all, he thinks that a definition of man must be settled upon, since in philosophy it is the supreme good of man that is in question, not that of a tree or of an animal or of God. In man's nature he finds two elements, body and soul; and he has no doubt whatever that of these two the soul is the better and by far the nobler element. But he discusses the question whether man is the soul alone or the body alone or a combination of body and soul. In the first case, the body would be like the horse to the horseman, where the horseman is not both horse and man but only the man, though he is called a horseman because of a relation to the horse which

he rides. In the second case, the body would be to the soul somewhat as the wineglass to the wine. For, although the wineglass is not a glass of wine, that is, not both the glass and the wine in the glass, but only the glass, a wineglass is a glass meant to contain wine. In the third case, man is neither the soul alone nor the body alone, but each of these is a part, and the man is the whole of which they are the parts, much as we say a team is made up of two horses harnessed together, of which both the left-hand one and the right-hand one are parts. We never say that either of them, however closely linked with its mate, is the team, but that the pair is the team.

Of these three views Varro chooses the third, regarding man as neither the soul alone nor the body alone but the combination of body and soul. Consequently, he says that man's supreme good, which constitutes his happiness, is made up out of the goods both of the soul and of the body. And for this reason he considers that the primary demands of nature are to be sought on their own account and that the same is true of virtue—the art of living derived from education—which, of all the soul's goods, is the highest. Once virtue, this art of living, has taken charge of our innate exigencies, which were previously unguided but which existed even when they lacked direction, then virtue seeks all these things with reference to herself, at the same time seeking herself and making use of all while she is making use of herself. In doing so, her purpose is to find delight and joy in all these things, more or less, according to a scale of greater and lesser values. Rejoicing in all without exception, she will forego certain lesser goods, if this is necessary for getting or keeping the greater ones. Meanwhile, there is absolutely no good, whether of soul or body, that virtue prefers to herself. For, virtue makes good use of both herself and of all other goods which can make a man happy. Where virtue is lacking, no

number of other goods are really any good to one who has them and, therefore, cannot really be called *his* goods, since they cannot profit one who uses them badly. Thus, the human life which is called happy is one which enjoys both virtue and the other goods of soul and body without which there can be no virtue; life is happier still if it enjoys also any or many of those other goods which are not essential to virtue; life is perfectly happy when it enjoys absolutely all goods of both soul and body, so that nothing is lacking. For, life is not the same thing as virtue, since only a virtuous life, and not any kind of life, is virtue. There can be a kind of life without any virtue, yet there can be no virtue without some kind of life. I could say the same for memory or reason or any other such endowment in a man. These, too, exist before education, nor can there be any education without them; nor, therefore, any virtue, which is a matter of education, without them. Speed in running, physical beauty, matchless strength, and other gifts of this kind are such that they can exist without virtue and virtue without them. Nevertheless, these are goods, too, and, according to the philosophers, virtue loves them for their sake,[1] and uses them and enjoys them as virtue ought.

The happy life is said, further, to be social when the goods of one's friends are loved for what they are[2] as one loves one's own goods, and when one wishes for one's friends what one wishes for oneself. These friends may be in a man's home, as in the case of wife, children, and servants; or may be fellow citizens in the city where one's home is located; or they may be the people of the whole world who make up human society; or they may be elsewhere in the cosmos made up of heaven and earth, like the gods, whom the phil-

1 Reading, with Dombart, *propter se ipsa* rather than, with Hoffmann, *propter se ipsam.*
2 . . . *propter se ipsa.*

osophers claim as friends (or, as Christians would say, more tenderly, like angels[3]).

The philosophers of the Old Academy hold that there can be no doubt about the reality of the supreme good and the ultimate evil. In this, they claim, lies the difference between themselves and the skeptics of the New Academy. So long as any philosopher holds these ultimates to be real, it is for them a matter of no consequence at all if he affects the dress and diet of a Cynic or of anyone else. As for the three kinds of life—contemplative, active, and mixed—they hold for the third.[4]

Such, says Varro, was the position of the Old Academy as held by Antiochus, who taught Cicero and himself—although Cicero, to be sure, makes Antiochus out, on several matters, to be more of a Stoic than an adherent of the Old Academy. However, this is no concern of mine, since I am more intent upon getting at the truth of itself than upon knowing what one philosopher thought about another.[5]

Chapter 4

If I am asked what stand the City of God would take on the issues raised and, first, what this City thinks of the supreme good and ultimate evil, the answer would be: She holds that eternal life is the supreme good and eternal death the supreme evil, and that we should live rightly in order to obtain the one and avoid the other. Hence the Scriptural expression, 'the just man lives by faith'[1]—by faith, for the fact is that we do

3 . . . *quos nos familiarius angelos dicimus.*
4 *Academica priora* 2.43.
5 . . . *de rebus ipsis iudicare debemus, quam pro magno de hominibus quid quisque senserit scire.*

1 Gal. 3.11.

not now behold our good and, therefore, must seek it by faith; nor can we of ourselves even live rightly, unless He who gives us faith helps us to believe and pray, for it takes faith to believe that we need His help.

Those who think that the supreme good and evil are to be found in this life are mistaken. It makes no difference whether it is in the body or in the soul or in both—or, specifically, in pleasure or virtue or in both—that they seek the supreme good. They seek in vain whether they look to serenity, to virtue, or to both; whether to pleasure plus serenity, or to virtue, or to all three; or to the satisfaction of our innate exigencies, or to virtue, or to both. It is in vain that men look for beatitude on earth or in human nature.[2] Divine Truth, as expressed in the Prophet's words, makes them look foolish: 'The Lord knows the thoughts of men'[3] or, as the text is quoted by St. Paul: 'The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise that they are vain.'[4]

For, what flow of eloquence is sufficient to set forth the miseries of human life? Cicero did the best he could in his *Consolatio de morte filiae,* but how little was his very best? As for the primary satisfactions of our nature,[5] when or where or how can they be so securely possessed in this life that they are not subject to the ups and downs of fortune? There is no pain of body, driving out pleasure, that may not befall the wise man; no anxiety that may not banish calm. A man's physical integrity is ended by the amputation or crippling of any of his limbs; his beauty is spoiled by deformity, his health by sickness, his vigor by weariness, his agility by torpor and sluggishness. There is not one of these that may not afflict the flesh even of a philosopher. Among our elementary require-

2 . . . *hic beati esse et a se ipsis beati fieri mira vanitate voluerunt.*
3 Ps. 93.11.
4 1 Cor. 3.20.
5 . . . *prima naturae.*

ments we reckon a graceful and becoming erectness and movement; but what happens to these as soon as some sickness brings on palsy or, still worse, a spinal deformity so severe that a man's hands touch the ground as though he were a four-footed beast? What is then left of any beauty or dignity in a man's posture or gait? Turn, now, to the primary endowments of the soul:[6] senses to perceive and intelligence to understand the truth. How much sensation does a man have left if, for example, he goes deaf and blind? And where does the reason or intelligence go, into what strange sleep, when sickness unsettles the mind? We can hardly hold back our tears when mad men say or do extravagant things—things wholly unlike their customary behavior and normal goodness. To witness such things, even to recall them, makes a decent man weep. Still worse is the case of those possessed by demons. Their intelligence seems driven away, not to say destroyed, when an evil spirit according to its will makes use of their body and soul. And who can be sure that even a philosopher will not be such a victim at some time in his life?

Further, what is to be said of our perception of the truth, at the very best? What kind of truth and how much of it can we reach through our bodily senses? Do we not read in the truth-speaking Book of Wisdom: 'For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things'?[7]

And what of the urge and appetite for action—*hormé,* as the Greeks call it—which is reckoned among the primary goods of our nature?[8] Is not this the root, too, of those restless energies of the madmen who fill us with tears and fears when their senses deceive them and their reason refuses to function?

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6 . . . *animi primigenia.*
7 Wisd. 9.15.
8 . . . *primis naturae deputant bonis.*

So much for the elementary endowments of nature. Look, now, at virtue herself, which comes later with education and claims for herself the topmost place among human goods. Yet, what is the life of virtue save one unending war with evil inclinations, and not with solicitations of other people alone, but with evil inclinations that arise within ourselves and are our very own.

I speak especially of temperance—*sōphrosynē,* as the Greeks call it—which must bridle our fleshly lusts if they are not to drag our will to consent to abominations of every sort. The mere fact that, as St. Paul says, 'the flesh is at war with the spirit,' is no small flaw in our nature; and virtue is at war with this evil inclination when, in the same Apostle's words, 'the spirit lusts against the flesh.' These are opposed to each other to such a degree that 'we do not the things that we would.'[9] And when we seek final rest in the supreme good, what do we seek save an end to this conflict between flesh and spirit, freedom from this propensity to evil against which the spirit is at war? Yet, will as we may, such liberty cannot be had in mortal life.

This much, however, we can do with the help of God—not yield by surrender of the spirit and be dragged into sin willingly. Meanwhile, we must not fondly imagine that, so long as we wage this inward war, we may achieve that longed-for beatitude which can be solely the prize of the victor. For there lives no man so perfected in wisdom as not to have some conflict with excessive desires.

Take, next, the virtue called prudence. Is not this virtue constantly on the lookout to distinguish what is good from what is evil, so that there may be no mistake made in seeking the one and avoiding the other? So it bears witness to the fact that we are surrounded by evil and have evil within us. This virtue teaches that it is evil to consent to desires leading

9 Gal. 5.17.

to sin and good to resist them. And what prudence preaches temperance puts into practice. Yet, neither prudence nor temperance can rid this life of the evils that are their constant concern.

Finally, there is justice. Its task is to see that to each is given what belongs to each. And this holds for the right order within man himself, so that it is just for the soul to be subordinate to God, and the body to the soul, and thus for body and soul taken together to be subject to God. Is there not abundant evidence that this virtue is unremittingly struggling to effect this internal order—and is far from finished? For, the less a man has God in his thoughts, the less is his soul subject to God; the more the flesh lusts counter to the spirit, the less the flesh is subject to the soul. So long, then, as such weakness, such moral sickliness remains within us, how can we dare to say that we are out of danger; and, if not yet out of danger, how can we say that our happiness is complete?

Look, now, at the great virtue called fortitude. Is not its very function—to bear patiently with misfortune—overwhelming evidence that human life is beset with unhappiness, however wise a man may be? It is beyond my comprehension how the Stoics can boldly argue that such ills are not really ills, meanwhile allowing that, if a philosopher should be tried by them beyond his obligation or duty to bear, he may have no choice but to take the easy way out by committing suicide. So stultifying is Stoic pride that, all evidences to the contrary, these men still pretend to find the ultimate good in this life and to hold that they are themselves the source of their own happiness. Their kind of sage—an astonishingly silly sage, indeed—may go deaf, dumb and blind, may be crippled, wracked with pain, visited with every imaginable affliction, driven at last to take his own life, yet have the colossal impertinence to call such an existence the happy life! Happy

life, indeed, which employs death's aid to end it! If such a life is happy, then I say, live it![10] Why pretend that evils are not evils, when they not only overcome the virtue of fortitude and force it to yield to evil, but make a man so irrational as to call one and the same life both happy and unlivable? How can anyone be so blind as not to see that if life is happy it should not be shunned? Yet, the moment sickness opens her mouth they say one must choose a way out. If so, why do they not bow their stiff necks and admit life's unhappiness? Now, let me ask: Was it courage or cowardice that made their hero Cato kill himself?[11] Certainly, he would not have done what he did had he not been too cowardly to endure the victory of Caesar. Where, then, was his fortitude? It was a fortitude that yielded, that surrendered, that was so beaten that Cato ran away, deserted, abandoned the happy life. Or, maybe it was no longer the happy life? In that case, it was unhappy. If so, how can anyone deny that the ills that made Cato's life unhappy and unlivable were real evils?

From this it follows that those who admit that such things are evils, so do the Aristotelians and those of the Old Academy whom Varro defends, are nearer the truth than the Stoics, even though Varro also makes the egregious mistake of maintaining that this life is still the happy life in spite of evils so grievous that, for one who suffers them, suicide becomes imperative. 'The pains and afflictions of the body,' Varro admits, 'are evils; and the worse the pains, the greater the evil. To escape them you should end your life.' I ask: Which life? He answers: 'This life which is made grievous by so many evils.' Life, then, is the happy life in the midst of evils which drive a man to escape from life? Is it, perhaps, the happy life precisely because you are allowed to escape its unhappiness by death? Suppose you should be bound by a

10 *Si beata est, maneatur in ea!*
11 Cf. above, 1.23.

divine law to remain in its evils and be permitted neither to die nor ever to be free from such misfortunes? Then, at least, you would have to say that such a life would be unhappy. And, surely, if you admit it would be unhappy if unending, you cannot say that it is not unhappy just because there is a quick way out. You cannot maintain that just because unhappiness is short-lived it is really not unhappiness at all; or, what is more preposterous, that because unhappiness is short-lived it deserves to be called happiness.

No, these ills of life must be very real indeed if they can drive even a sage of their type to take his life. For, these philosophers say—and rightly say—that the first and most fundamental command of nature is that a man should cherish his own human life and, by his very nature, shun death; that a man should be his own best friend, wanting and working with all his might and main to keep himself alive and to preserve the union of his body and soul. These ills must be very real indeed if they can subdue the very instinct of nature that struggles in every possible way to put death off; overwhelm it so utterly that death, once shunned, is now desired, sought, and, when all else fails, is self-inflicted. Yes, very real, when they can turn courage into a killer,[12] if, indeed, there be any question of genuine courage, when this virtue, devised to support and steel a man, is so battered down by misfortune that—having failed to sustain him—it is driven, against its very function, to finish him off. It is true, of course, that a philosopher should face death as well as all other trials, with fortitude, but that means death coming upon him from without.

If then, as these philosophers held, even a wise man must yield to suicide, they ought logically to admit that there are evils—even insufferable evils—that account for this tragic compulsion; and that a life so burdensome, so exposed to

12 . . . *quae fortitudinem faciunt homicidam.*

fortune's ebb and flow, should not be called happy! Nor would those who talk of 'the happy life' ever have called life happy if they had yielded to the truth and the cogency of reason in their search for the happy life as readily as they yield to unhappiness and the weight of evils when they lose their life by suicide; and if, further, they had given up the idea that they could enjoy the supreme good in this mortal life. They would have realized that man's very virtues, his best and most useful possessions, are the most solid evidences of the miseries of life, precisely because their function is to stand by him in perils and problems and pains.

For, when virtues are genuine virtues—and that is possible only when men believe in God—they make no pretense of protecting their possessors from unhappiness, for that would be a false promise; but they do claim that human life, now compelled to feel the misery of so many grievous ills on earth, can, by the hope of heaven, be made both happy and secure. If we are asked how a life can be happy before we are saved, we have the answer of St. Paul: 'For in hope were we saved. But hope that is seen is not hope. For how can a man hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.'[13]

Of course, the Apostle was not speaking of men lacking prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice, but of men whose virtues were true virtues because the men were living by faith. Thus, as 'we are saved by hope,' so we are made happy by hope. Neither our salvation nor our beatitude is here present, but 'we wait for it' in the future, and we wait 'with patience,' precisely because we are surrounded by evils which patience must endure until we come to where all good things are sources of inexpressible happiness and where there will be no longer anything to endure. Such is to be our salvation in the hereafter, such our final blessedness. It is because the

13 Rom. 8.24,25.

philosophers will not believe in this beatitude which they cannot see that they go on trying to fabricate here below an utterly fraudulent felicity built on virtue filled with pride and bound to fail them in the end.

Chapter 5

So much for the philosophers' 'happy life.' What we Christians like better is their teaching that the life of virtue should be a social life. For, if the life of the saints had not been social, how could the City of God (which we have been discussing in all these nineteen Books) have a beginning, make progress, and reach its appointed goal? Yet, social living, given the misery of our mortality, has enormous drawbacks—more than can be easily counted, or known for what they really are. Just recall the words of a character in one of the pagan comedies who is applauded for expressing everyone's feeling:

> A wife I wed. What a worry, the shrew!
> The babies were born, and the worries grew.[1]

And remember the troubles of lovers listed by the same Terence:

> Slights and fights and spirits vexed,
> War today and peace the next.[2]

All human relationships are fraught with such misunderstandings. Not even the pure-hearted affection of friends is free from them. All history is a tale of 'slights and fights and

1 Terence, *Adelphi* 5.4.13,14.
2 *Eunuchus* 1.1.14,15.

spirits vexed,' and we must expect such unpleasantness as an assured thing, whereas peace is a good unguaranteed—dependent upon the unknowable interior dispositions of our friends. Even if we could read their heart today, anything might happen tomorrow. Take the members of a single family. Who are as fond of one another as, in general, they are or, at least, are expected to be? Yet, who can rely utterly even on family affection? How much unhappiness has sprung from the ambush of domestic disloyalties! And how galling the disillusionment after peace had been so sweet—or seemed to be, though in fact it was nothing but a clever counterfeit. That is why no one can read, without a sigh, those touching words of Cicero: 'No snares are ever so insidious as those lurking as dutiful devotion or labeled as family affection. You can easily escape from an open foe, but when hatred lurks in the bosom of a family it has taken a position and has pounced upon you before it can be spied out or recognized for what it is.'[3]

Even divine Revelation reminds us: 'And a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'[4] It breaks the heart of any good man to hear this, for, even if he be brave enough to bear, or vigilant enough to beware of, the ruses of faithless friends, he must suffer greatly just the same when he discovers how treacherous they are. And it makes no difference whether they were genuine friends who have turned traitors, or traitorous men who had been trading on pretended affection all along.

If, then, the home, everyman's haven in the storms of life, affords no solid security, what shall one say of the civic community? The bigger a city is, the fuller it is of legal battles, civil and criminal, and the more frequent are wild and bloody seditions or civil wars. Even when the frays are over, there is never any freedom from fear.

3 *In Verrem* 2.1.15.
4 Matt. 10.36.

Chapter 6

Even when a city is enjoying the profoundest peace, some men must be sitting in judgment on their fellow men. Even at their best, what misery and grief they cause! No human judge can read the conscience of the man before him. That is why so many innocent witnesses are tortured to find what truth there is in the alleged guilt of other men. It is even worse when the accused man himself is tortured to find out if he be guilty. Here a man still unconvicted must undergo certain suffering for an uncertain crime—not because his guilt is known, but because his innocence is unproved. Thus it often happens that the ignorance of the judge turns into tragedy for the innocent party. There is something still more insufferable—deplorable beyond all cleansing with our tears.[1] Often enough, when a judge tries to avoid putting a man to death whose innocence is not manifest, he has him put to torture, and so it happens, because of woeful lack of evidence, that he both tortures and kills the blameless man whom he tortured lest he kill him without cause. And if, on Stoic principles, the innocent man chooses to escape from life rather than endure such torture any longer, he will confess to a crime he never committed. And when it is all over, the judge will still be in the dark whether the man he put to death was guilty or not guilty, even though he tortured him to save his innocent life, and then condemned him to death. Thus, to gather evidence, he tortures an innocent man and, lacking evidence, kills him.

Such being the effect of human ignorance even in judicial procedure, will any philosopher-judge dare to take his place on the bench? You may be sure, he will. He would think it very wrong indeed to withdraw from his bounden duty to

1 . . . *intolerabilius magisque plangendum rigandumque, si fieri possit, fontibus lacrimarum.*

society. But that innocent men should be tortured as witnesses in trials not their own; that accused men should be so overcome by pain as falsely to plead guilty and then die, as they were tortured, in innocence; that many men should die as a result of or during their torturings, prior to any verdict at all —in all this our philosopher-judge sees nothing wrong. So, too, a judge in his ignorance will condemn to death, as sometimes happens, men who had nothing but the good of society at heart. To prevent crimes from going unpunished, such men go to court; but the witnesses lie and the guilty party holds out inhumanly under the torture and makes no confession; the accusation, in spite of the facts, is not sustained and it is the accuser who is condemned. No, our philosopher-judge does not reckon such abuses as burdens on his conscience because he has no intention of doing harm. Often, he would say, he cannot get at the truth, yet the good of society demands that he hand down decisions. My only point is that, as a man, surely his cannot be the 'happy life' even though his philosophy may save him from a sense of wrong-doing. Granted that his ignorance and his office are to blame for the torture and death of innocent men, is it any consolation to feel free of responsibility unless he is also happy? Surely there is something finer and more humane in seeing and detesting his wretchedness in this necessity and, if he is a Christian, in crying out to God: 'Deliver me from my necessities.'[2]

Chapter 7

After the city comes the world community. This is the third stage in the hierarchy of human associations. First, we have the home; then the city; finally, the globe. And, of course, as

2 Ps. 24.17.

with the perils of the ocean, the bigger the community, the fuller it is of misfortunes.

The first misfortune is the lack of communication resulting from language differences. Take two men who meet and find that some common need calls on them to remain together rather than to part company. Neither knows the language of the other. As far as intercommunication goes, these two, both men, are worse off than two dumb animals, even of different kinds. For all its identity in both, their human nature is of no social help, so long as the language barrier makes it impossible for them to tell each other what they are thinking about. That is why a man is more at home with his dog than with a foreigner.

It will be answered that the Roman Empire, in the interests of peaceful collaboration, imposes on nations it has conquered the yoke of both law and language, and thus has an adequate, or even an overflowing, abundance of interpreters. True enough. But at what cost! There is one war after another, havoc everywhere, tremendous slaughterings of men.

All this for peace. Yet, when the wars are waged, there are new calamities brewing. To begin with, there never has been, nor, is there today, any absence of hostile foreign powers to provoke war. What is worse, the very development of the empire accruing from their incorporation has begotten still worse wars within. I refer to the civil wars and social uprisings that involve even more wretched anxieties for human beings, either shaken by their actual impact, or living in fear of their renewal. Massacres, frequent and sweeping, hardships too dire to endure are but a part of the ravages of war. I am utterly unable to describe them as they are, and as they ought to be described; and even if I should try to begin, where could I end?

I know the objection that a good ruler will wage wars only if they are just. But, surely, if he will only remember that he

is a man, he will begin by bewailing the necessity he is under of waging even just wars. A good man would be under compulsion to wage no wars at all, if there were not such things as just wars. A just war, moreover, is justified only by the injustice of an aggressor; and that injustice ought to be a source of grief to any good man, because it is human injustice. It would be deplorable in itself, apart from being a source of conflict.

Any man who will consider sorrowfully evils so great, such horrors and such savagery, will admit his human misery. And if there is any man who can endure such calamities, or even contemplate them without feeling grief, his condition is all the more wretched for that. For it is only the loss of all humane feeling that could make him call such a life 'the happy life.'

Chapter 8

Another of the not uncommon miseries of our human life is to mistake, by a misunderstanding close to madness, enemies for friends and friends for enemies. This apart, even granted the ordinary miseries and mistakes, of which all human relationship is full, there is no greater consolation than the unfeigned loyalty and mutual love of good men who are true friends. Yet, the more friends we have, and the more scattered they are locally, the more widely stretched are our heartfelt fears, lest any of the mountainous miseries of life befall them. We become apprehensive not only about possible afflictions of famine, war, sickness, imprisonment, or such unimaginable sufferings as may be their lot in slavery. What is far harder to swallow is our fear that they may fail us in faithfulness, turn to hate us and work us harm. If and when our fear becomes a fact, and we find it out (and the more friends we have, the more sources of such heartbreak), the fire of pain

is whipped to such a blazing in our heart[1] as none can guess who has not felt the smart. Indeed, we would rather hear that our friends are dead.

Yet here is another source of sadness, for the death of those can never leave us free from grief whose friendship during life was a solace and delight. There are some who say men should not grieve. Then, let them try, if they can, to ban all loving interchange of thoughts, cut off and outlaw all friendly feelings, callously break the bonds of all human fellowship, or claim that such human relationships must be emptied of all tenderness. And if this is utterly impossible, it is no less impossible for us not to taste as bitter the death of those whose life for us was such a source of sweetness. It is, in fact, because such grief, in a broken heart, is like a wound or open sore that men feel it a duty to offer us the balm of their condolences. And if the heart is more easily and quickly healed the more virtuous a man is, that does not mean that there was no wound to heal.

There is no escape, then, from that misery of human life which is caused, in varying degrees, by the deaths of very close friends, especially if they have played some important role in public life. Yet it is easier to watch any of our loved ones die, in this sense, than to learn that they have lost their faith, or have fallen into grievous sin, and thus are spiritually dead. It is because of the immensity of this misery filling the earth that the Scripture asks: 'Is not the life of man upon earth a trial?'[2] No wonder the Lord said: 'Woe to the world because of scandals,'[3] and again: 'Because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold.'[4]

That is why we Christians can feel a real joy when our

1 . . . *quibus cor nostrum flagris uratur.*
2 Job 7.1, reading *tentatio* in place of the Vulgate *militia.*
3 Matt. 18.7.
4 Matt. 24.12.

friends die a holy death. Their death, of course, afflicts our heart, but faith gives us the surer consolation, that they are now freed from those evils of this present life which threaten the best of men with either failure or defilement—and sometimes with both.

Chapter 9

In the philosophy of the Platonists, who hold that the gods are our friends, there is place for a fourth kind of society, which is not merely global but, so to speak, cosmic, in the sense that it embraces even heaven; and in this society our friends are such that there can be no fear whatever of their death or moral degradation causing us any sadness. However, partly because we cannot associate with them as familiarly as we do with men—a further affliction of this present life—and partly because Satan sometimes 'transforms himself into an angel of light,'[1] in order to test those who need testing or to deceive those deserving deception, nothing but the great mercy of God can save a man from mistaking bad demons for good angels, and false friends for true ones, and from sufferings the full damages of this diabolical deception, all the more deadly in that it is wily beyond words.

Now, for anyone who needs this great mercy of God, what is this need but another of the great miseries of human life—in this instance, the overwhelming ignorance that makes us such easy victims of the devils' deceit? Certainly, in the unholy city, the philosophers who talked of the gods as their friends had fallen victims to those malignant demons who were unchallenged lords of that city which is doomed to share their eternal suffering. If any proof of this were needed, it is provided by the kind of gods who were worshiped by the sacred or, rather, sacriligeous rites with which they were

1 2 Cor. 11.14.

honored, by the indecent plays in which their sins were re-enacted for the imaginary propitiation of the very gods who have conceived and commanded these filthy celebrations.

Chapter 10

Not even the holy and faithful followers of the one true and supreme God are beyond the reach of demonic trickery and temptation in its many forms. Yet our anxiety in this matter is good for us, so long as we inhabit this frail body in this evil world, for it sends us seeking more ardently after that heavenly peace which is to be unshakeable and unending. There, all of our natural endowments—all that the Creator of all natures has given to our nature—will be both good and everlasting, where every wound in the soul is to be healed by wisdom and every weakness of body to be removed by resurrection; where our virtues will be no longer at war with passion or opposition of any kind, but are to have, as the prize of victory, an eternally imperturbable peace. This is what is meant by that consummate beatitude, that limitless perfection, that end that never ends.[1]

On earth we are happy, after a fashion, when we enjoy the peace, little as it is, which a good life brings; but such happiness compared with the beatitude which is our end in eternity is, in point of fact, misery. When we mortal men, living amid the realities of earth, enjoy the utmost peace which life can give us, then it is the part of virtue, if we are living rightly, to make a right use of the goods we are enjoying. When, on the other hand, we do not enjoy this temporal peace, then it is the function of virtue to make a right use of the misfortunes which we are suffering. By genuine Christian virtue

1 *Ipsa est enim beatitudo finalis, ipse perfectionis finis, qui consumentem non habet finem.*

we mean here that we refer not only all good things which are being rightly used, and all the right use we are making of blessings and misfortunes, but our very virtue itself to that End in which there will be a peace so good that no peace could be better, a peace so great that a greater would be impossible.

Chapter 11

Thus, we may say of peace what we have said of eternal life—that it is our highest good; more particularly because the holy Psalmist was addressing the City of God (the nature of which I am trying, with so much difficulty, to make clear) when he said: 'Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Sion. Because he hath strengthened the bolts of thy gates, he hath blessed thy children within thee. He hath placed peace in thy borders.'[1] For, when the bolts of that city's gates will have been strengthened, none will enter in and none will issue forth. Hence, its borders [*fines*] must be taken to mean that peace which I am trying to show is our final good. Note, too, that Jerusalem, the mystical name which symbolizes this City, means, as I have already mentioned, 'the vision of peace.'

However, the word 'peace' is so often applied to conditions here on earth, where life is not eternal, that it is better, I think, to speak of 'eternal life' rather than of 'peace' as the end or supreme good of the City of God. It is in this sense that St. Paul says: 'But now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting.'[2]

It would be simplest for all concerned if we spoke of 'peace in eternal life,' or of 'eternal' or of 'eternal life in peace,' as the end or supreme good of this City. The trouble with the

1 Ps. 146.12-14. . . . *qui posuit fines tuos pacem.*
2 Rom. 6.22.

expression 'eternal life' is that those unfamiliar with the Scriptures might take this phrase to apply also to the eternal loss of the wicked, either because, as philosophers, they accept the immortality of the soul, or even because, as Christians, they know by faith that the punishment of the wicked has no end and, therefore, that they could not be punished forever unless their life were eternal.

The trouble with 'peace' is that, even on the level of earthly and temporal values, nothing that we can talk about, long for, or finally get, is so desirable, so welcome, so good as peace. At any rate, I feel sure that if I linger a little longer on this topic of peace I shall tire very few of my readers. After all, peace is the end of this City which is the theme of this work; besides, peace is so universally loved that its very name falls sweetly on the ear.

Chapter 12

Any man who has examined history and human nature will agree with me that there is no such thing as a human heart that does not crave for joy and peace. One has only to think of men who are bent on war. What they want is to win, that is to say, their battles are but bridges to glory and to peace. The whole point of victory is to bring opponents to their knees—this done, peace ensues. Peace, then, is the purpose of waging war; and this is true even of men who have a passion for the exercise of military prowess as rulers and commanders.

What, then, men want in war is that it should end in peace. Even while waging a war every man wants peace, whereas no one wants war while he is making peace. And even when men are plotting to disturb the peace, it is merely to fashion a new peace nearer to the heart's desire; it is not because they dislike

peace as such. It is not that they love peace less, but that they love their kind of peace more. And even when a secession is successful, its purpose is not achieved unless some sort of peace remains among those who plotted and planned the rebellion. Take even a band of highwaymen. The more violence and impunity they want in disturbing the peace of other men, the more they demand peace among themselves. Take even the case of a robber so powerful that he dispenses with partnership, plans alone, and single-handed robs and kills his victims. Even he maintains some kind of peace, however shadowy, with those he cannot kill and whom he wants to keep in the dark with respect to his crimes. Certainly in his own home he wants to be at peace with his wife and children and any other members of his household. Of course, he is delighted when his every nod is obeyed; if it is not obeyed, he rages, and scolds, and demands peace in his own home and, if need be, gets it by sheer brutality. He knows that the price of peace in domestic society is to have everyone subject in the home to some head—in this instance, to himself.

Suppose, now, a man of this type were offered the allegiance of a larger society, say of a city or of a nation, with the pledge that he would be obeyed as he looks to be obeyed under his own roof. In this case, he would no longer hide himself away in a darksome robber's den; he would show himself off as a high and mighty king—the same man, however, with all of his old greed and criminality. Thus it is that all men want peace in their own society, and all want it in their own way. When they go to war what they want is to make, if they can, their enemies their own, and then to impose on them the victor's will and call it peace.

Now let us imagine a man like the one that poetry and mythology tell us about, a being so wild and anti-social that it was better to call him half-human than fully a man. He was called Cacus, which is Greek for 'bad.' His kingdom was

the solitude of a dreadful cave and it was his extraordinary wickedness that gave him his name. He had no wife to exchange soft words with him; no tiny children to play with; no bigger ones to keep in order; no friend whose company he could enjoy, not even his father, Vulcan—than whom he was at least this much luckier that he had never begotten a monster like himself! There was no one to whom he would give anything, but whenever and from whomsoever he could he would take whatever he wanted and whenever he wanted it.

Nevertheless, all alone as he was in a cave that was always 'warm with the blood of some recent victim,'[1] his sole longing was for peace in which no force would do him harm and no fear disturb his rest. Even with his own body he wanted to be at peace, and he was at ease only when peace was there. Even when he was bidding his members to obey him and was seizing, killing, and devouring his victims, his purpose was peace—the speediest possible peace with his mortal nature, driven by its needs to rebellion, and with his hunger, in sedition, clamoring for the breakup of the union of body and soul. Brutal and wild as he was and brutal and wild as were his ways, what he wanted was to have his life and limbs in peace. So much so that, had he been as willing to be at peace with his neighbors as he was active in procuring peace within himself and in his cave, no one would have called him wicked, nor a monster, nor even sub-human; or, at least, despite the shape of his body and the smoke and fire that issued from his mouth and kept all neighbors at a distance, people would have said that what looked like injustice, greed, and savagery were merely means to self-preservation. The truth is, of course, that there never existed any such being, or at least, none just like the foil the poets' fancy invented to glorify Hercules at the expense of Cacus. As is the case with most poetic inventions,

1 *Aeneid* 8.195.

we need not believe that any such creature, human or subhuman, ever lived.

I turn now to real wild beasts (from which category the animal part of the so-called half-beast,[2] Cacus, was borrowed). They, too, keep their own particular genus in a kind of peace. Their males and females meet and mate, foster and feed their young, even though many of them by nature are more solitary than gregarious, like lions, foxes, eagles, and owls—as contrasted with deer, pigeons, starlings, and bees. Even a tigress purrs over her cubs and curbs all her fierceness when she fondles them. Even a falcon which seems so lonely when hovering above its prey mates and builds a nest, helps to hatch the eggs and feed the young, and makes every effort to maintain with the mother falcon a peaceful domestic society.

It is even more so with man. By the very laws of his nature, he seems, so to speak, forced into fellowship and, as far as in him lies, into peace with every man. At any rate, even when wicked men go to war they want peace for their own society and would like, if possible, to make all men members of that society, so that every one and every thing might be at the service of one head. Of course, the only means such a conqueror knows is to have all men so fear or love him that they will accept the peace which he imposes. For, so does pride perversely copy God.[3] Sinful man hates the equality of all men under God and, as though he were God, loves to impose his sovereignty on his fellow men. He hates the peace of God which is just and prefers his own peace which is unjust. However, he is powerless not to love peace of some sort. For, no man's sin is so unnatural as to wipe out all traces whatsoever of human nature. Anyone, then, who is rational enough to prefer right to wrong and order to disorder

2 *Aeneid* 8.267: *semiferus.*
3 *Sic enim superbia perverse imitatur Deum.*

can see that the kind of peace that is based on injustice, as compared with that which is based on justice, does not deserve the name of peace.

Of course, even disorder, in whole or in part, must come to some kind of terms either with the situation in which it finds itself or with the elements out of which it takes its being—otherwise it would have no being at all.

Take a man hanging upside down. Certainly his members are in disorder and the posture of the body as a whole is unnatural. The parts which nature demands should be above and below have become topsy-turvy. Such a position disturbs the peace of the body and is therefore painful. Nevertheless, the soul remains at peace with the body and continues to work for its welfare. Otherwise, the man would not live to feel the agony. And even if the soul is driven from the body by excess of pain, nevertheless, so long as the limbs hold together, some kind of peace among these parts remains. Otherwise, there would be no corpse to go on dangling there. Further, the fact that by gravity the corpse, made out of earth, tends to fall to the ground and pulls at the noose that holds it up proves that there is some order in which it seeks peace, and that its weight is, as it were, crying out for a place where it can rest. Lifeless and insensible though the body now is, it does not renounce that appropriate peace in the order of nature which it either has or seeks to have.

So, too, when a corpse is treated to embalming, to prevent dissolution and decay, there is a kind of peace which holds the parts together while the whole is committed to the earth, its proper resting place, and, therefore, a place with which the body is at peace. If, on the other hand, embalming is omitted and nature is allowed to take its course, the corpse remains a battleground of warring exhalations (that attack our senses with the stench we smell) only until such time as they finally fall in with the elements of this world and,

slowly, bit by bit, become indistinguishable in a common peace.

Even afterward, however, the law and ordering of the Creator who is supreme in the whole cosmos and the regulator of its peace are still in control. Even when tiny bacteria spring from the corpse of a larger animal, it is by the same law of the Creator that all these minute bodies serve in peace the organic wholes of which they are parts. Even when the flesh of dead animals is eaten by other animals, there is no change in the universal laws which are meant for the common good of every kind of life, the common good that is effected by bringing like into peace with like. It makes no difference what disintegrating forces are at work, or what new combinations are made, or even what changes or transformations are effected.

Chapter 13

The peace, then, of the body lies in the ordered equilibrium of all its parts; the peace of the irrational soul, in the balanced adjustment of its appetites; the peace of the reasoning soul, in the harmonious correspondence of conduct and conviction; the peace of body and soul taken together, in the well-ordered life and health of the living whole. Peace between a mortal man and his Maker consists in ordered obedience, guided by faith, under God's eternal law; peace between man and man consists in regulated fellowship. The peace of a home lies in the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between the members of a family living together. The peace of the political community is an ordered harmony of authority and obedience between citizens. The peace of the heavenly City lies in a perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God. Peace, in its final sense, is the

calm that comes of order.[1] Order is an arrangement of like and unlike things whereby each of them is disposed in its proper place.

This being so, those who are unhappy, in so far as they are unhappy, are not in peace, since they lack the calm of that Order which is beyond every storm; nevertheless, even in their misery they cannot escape from order, since their very misery is related to responsibility and to justice. They do not share with the blessed in their tranquility, but this very separation is the result of the law of order. Moreover, even the miserable can be momentarily free from anxiety and can reach some measure of adjustment to their surroundings and, hence, some tranquility of order and, therefore, some slender peace. However, the reason why they remain unhappy is that, although they *may* be momentarily free from worry and from pain, they are not in a condition where they *must* be free both from worry and pain.[2] Their condition of misery is worse when such peace as they have is not in harmony with that law which governs the order of nature. Their peace can also be disturbed by pain and in proportion to their pain; yet, some peace will remain, so long as the pain is not too acute and their organism as a whole does not distintegrate.

Notice that there can be life without pain, but no pain without some kind of life. In the same way, there can be peace without any kind of war, but no war that does not suppose some kind of peace. This does not mean that war as war involves peace; but war, in so far as those who wage it or have it waged upon them are beings with organic natures, involves peace—for the simple reason that to be

1 . . . *pax omnium rerum tranquillitas ordinis.*
2 . . . *etsi in aliqua securitate non dolent, non tamen ibi sunt, ubi securi esse ac dolere debeant.*

organic means to be ordered and, therefore, to be, in some sense, at peace.

Similarly, there can be a nature without any defect and, even, a nature in which there can be no kind of evil whatever, but there can be no nature completely devoid of good.[3] Even the nature of the Devil, in so far as it is a nature, is not evil; it was perversity—not being true to itself—that made it bad.[4] The Devil did not 'stand in the truth'[5] and, therefore, did not escape the judgment of truth. He did not stand fast in the tranquility of order—nor did he, for all that, elude the power of the Ordainer. The goodness which God gave to his nature does not withdraw him from the justice of God by which that nature is subject to punishment. Yet, even in that punishment, God does not hound the good which He created, but only the evil which the Devil committed. So it is that God does not take back the whole of His original gift. He takes a part and leaves a part; He leaves a nature that can regret what God has taken back. Indeed, the very pain inflicted is evidence of both the good that is lost and the good that is left. For, if there were no good left, there would be no one to lament the good that has been lost.

A man who sins is just that much worse if he rejoices in the loss of holiness; but one who suffers pain, and does not benefit by it, laments, at least, the loss of his health. Holiness and health are both good things and, because the loss of any good is more a cause for grief than for gladness (unless there be some higher compensation—the soul's holiness, to be sure, is preferable to the body's health), it is more in accordance with nature that a sinner grieve over his punishment than that he rejoice over his offense. Consequently, just

3 Cf. above, 11.22; 12.3.
4 . . . *perversitas eam malam fecit.*
5 John 8.44. Note St. Augustine's play on the words *in veritate* (in truth) and *perversitas* (not being true to itself).

as a man's happiness in abandoning the good of wrong-doing betrays his bad will, so his sorrowing for the good he has lost when in pain bears witness to the good of his nature. For, anyone who grieves over the loss of peace to his nature does so out of some remnant of that peace wherewith his nature loves itself. This is what happens—deservedly, too—in eternal punishment. In the midst of their agonies the evil and the godless weep for the loss of their nature's goods, knowing, meanwhile, that God whose great generosity they contemned was perfectly just when He took these goods away.

God, the wise Creator and just Ordainer of all natures, has made the mortal race of man the loveliest of all lovely things on earth. He has given to men good gifts suited to their existence here below. Among these is temporal peace, according to the poor limits of mortal life, in health, security, and human fellowship; and other gifts, too, needed to preserve this peace or regain it, once lost—for instance, the blessings that lie all around us, so perfectly adapted to our senses: daylight, speech, air to breathe, water to drink, everything that goes to feed, clothe, cure, and beautify the body. These good gifts are granted, however, with the perfectly just understanding that whoever uses the goods which are meant for the mortal peace of mortal men, as these goods should be used, will receive more abundant and better goods—nothing less than immortal peace and all that goes with it, namely, the glory and honor of enjoying God and one's neighbor in God everlastingly; but that whoever misuses his gifts on earth will both lose what he has and never receive the better gifts of heaven.

Chapter 14

In the earthly city, then, temporal goods are to be used with a view to the enjoyment of earthly peace, whereas, in the

heavenly City, they are used with a view to the enjoyment of eternal peace. Hence, if we were merely unthinking brutes, we would pursue nothing beyond the orderly interrelationship of our bodily part and the appeasing of our appetites, nothing, that is, beyond the comfort of the flesh and plenty of pleasures, so that the peace of body might contribute to peace of the soul. For, if order in the body be lacking, the peace of an irrational soul is checked, since it cannot attain the satisfaction of its appetites. Both of these forms of peace meanwhile subserve that other form of peace which the body and soul enjoy between them, the peace of life and health in good order.

For, just as brutes show that they love the peace or comfort of their bodies by shunning pain, and the peace of their souls by pursuing pleasure to satisfy their appetites, so, too, by running from death, they make clear enough how much they love the peace which keeps body and soul together.

Because, however, man has a rational soul, he makes everything he shares with brutes subserve the peace of his rational soul, so that he first measures things with his mind before he acts, in order to achieve that harmonious correspondence of conduct and conviction which I called the peace of the rational soul. His purpose in desiring not to be vexed with pain, nor disturbed with desire, nor disintegrated by death is that he may learn something profitable and so order his habits and way of life. However, if the infirmity of his human mind is not to bring him in his pursuit of knowledge to some deadly error, he needs divine authority to give secure guidance, and divine help so that he may be unhampered in following the guidance given.

And because, so long as man lives in his mortal body and is a pilgrim far from the Lord, he walks, not by vision, but by faith. Consequently, he refers all peace of body or soul, or their combination, to that higher peace which unites a mortal

man with the immortal God and which I defined as 'ordered obedience guided by faith, under God's eternal law.'

Meanwhile, God teaches him two chief commandments, the love of God and the love of neighbor. In these precepts man finds three beings to love, namely, God, himself, and his fellow man, and knows that he is not wrong in loving himself so long as he loves God. As a result, he must help his neighbor (whom he is obliged to love as himself) to love God. Thus, he must help his wife, children, servants, and all others whom he can influence. He must wish, moreover, to be similarly helped by his fellow man, in case he himself needs such assistance. Out of all this love he will arrive at peace, as much as in him lies, with every man—at that human peace which is regulated fellowship. Right order here means, first, that he harm no one, and, second, that he help whomever he can. His fundamental duty is to look out for his own home, for both by natural and human law he has easier and readier access to their requirements.

St. Paul says: 'But if any does not take care of his own, and especially of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.'[1] From this care arises that peace of the home which lies in the harmonious interplay of authority and obedience among those who live there. For, those who have the care of the others give the orders—a man to his wife, parents to their children, masters to their servants. And those who are cared for must obey—wives their husband, children their parents, servants their masters. In the home of a religious man, however, of a man living by faith and as yet a wayfarer from the heavenly City, those who command serve those whom they appear to rule—because, of course, they do not command out of lust to domineer, but out of a sense of duty—not out of pride like princes but out of solicitude like parents.[2]

1 1 Tim. 5.8.

2 . . . *nec principandi superbia, sed providendi misericordia.*

Chapter 15

This family arrangement is what nature prescribes, and what God intended in creating man: 'let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, over all the wild animals and every creature that crawls on the earth.'[1] God wanted rational man, made to His image, to have no dominion except over irrational nature. He meant no man, therefore, to have dominion over man, but only man over beast. So it fell out that those who were holy in primitive times became shepherds over sheep rather than monarchs over men, because God wishes in this way to teach us that the normal hierarchy of creatures is different from that which punishment for sin has made imperative. For, when subjection came, it was merely a condition deservedly imposed on sinful man. So, in Scripture, there is no mention of the word 'servant' until holy Noe used it in connection with the curse on his son's wrong-doing.[2] It is a designation that is not natural, but one that was deserved because of sin.

The Latin word for 'slave' is *servus* and it is said that this word is derived from the fact that those who, by right of conquest, could have been killed were sometimes kept and guarded, *servabantur,* by their captors and so became slaves and were called *servi.* Now, such a condition of servitude could only have arisen as a result of sin, since whenever a just war is waged the opposing side must be in the wrong, and every victory, even when won by wicked men, is a divine judgment to humble the conquered and to reform or punish their sin. To this truth Daniel, the great man of God, bore witness. When he was languishing in the Babylonian captivity he confessed to God his sins and those of his people and avowed, with pious repentance, that these sins were the cause

1 Gen. 1.26.
2 Gen. 9.25, 'a servant of servants shall he be.'

of the captivity.[3] It is clear, then, that sin is the primary cause of servitude, in the sense of a social status in which one man is compelled to be subjected to another man. Nor does this befall a man, save by the decree of God, who is never unjust and who knows how to impose appropriate punishments on different sinners.

Our heavenly Master says: 'everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.'[4] So it happens that holy people are sometimes enslaved to wicked masters who are, in turn, themselves slaves. For, 'by whatever a man is overcome, of this also he is a slave.'[5] Surely it is better to be the slave of a man than the slave of passion as when, to take but one example, the lust for lordship raises such havoc in the hearts of men. Such, then, as men now are, is the order of peace. Some are in subjection to others, and, while humility helps those who serve, pride harms those in power. But, as men once were, when their nature was as God created it, no man was a slave either to man or to sin. However, slavery is now penal in character and planned by that law which commands the preservation of the natural order and forbids its disturbance. If no crime had ever been perpetrated against this law, there would be no crime to repress with the penalty of enslavement.

It is with this in mind that St. Paul goes so far as to admonish slaves to obey their masters and to serve them so sincerely and with such good will[6] that, if there is no chance of manumission, they may make their slavery a kind of freedom by serving with love and loyalty, free from fear and feigning,[7] until injustice becomes a thing of the past and every human sovereignty and power is done away with, so that God may be all in all.[8]

3 Dan. 9.5.
4 John 8.34.
5 2 Pet. 2.19.
6 Eph. 6.5,7.
7 . . . *non timore subdolo, sed fideli dilectione serviendo.*
8 1 Cor. 15.24,28.

Chapter 16

Our holy Fathers in the faith, to be sure, had slaves, but in the regulation of domestic peace it was only in matters of temporal importance that they distinguished the position of their children from the status of their servants. So far as concerns the worship of God—from whom all must hope for eternal blessings—they had like loving care for all the household without exception. This was what nature demanded, and it was from this kind of behavior that there grew the designation 'father of the family,' which is so widely accepted that even wicked and domineering men love to be so called.

Those who are true fathers are as solicitous for every one in their households as for their own children to worship and to be worthy of God. They hope and yearn for all to arrive in that heavenly home where there will be no further need of giving orders to other human beings, because there will be no longer any duty to help those who are happy in immortal life. In the meantime, fathers ought to look upon their duty to command as harder than the duty of slaves to obey.

Meanwhile, in case anyone in the home behaves contrary to its peace, he is disciplined by words or whipping[1] or other kind of punishment lawful and licit in human society, and for his own good, to readjust him to the peace he has abandoned. For, there is no more benevolence and helpfulness in bringing about the loss of a greater good than there is innocence and compassion in allowing a culprit to go from bad to worse. It is the duty of a blameless person not just to do no wrong, but to keep others from wrong-doing and to punish it when done, so that the one punished may be improved by the experience and others be warned by the example.

Now, since every home should be a beginning or fragmentary constituent of a civil community, and every beginning

1 . . . *verbo seu verbere.*

related to some specific end, and every part to the whole of which it is a part, it ought to follow that domestic peace has a relation to political peace. In other words, the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between those who live together has a relation to the ordered harmony of authority and obedience between those who live in a city. This explains why a father must apply certain regulations of civil law to the governance of his home, so as to make it accord with the peace of the whole community.

Chapter 17

While the homes of unbelieving men are intent upon acquiring temporal peace out of the possessions and comforts of this temporal life, the families which live according to faith look ahead to the good things of heaven promised as imperishable, and use material and temporal goods in the spirit of pilgrims, not as snares or obstructions to block their way to God, but simply as helps to ease and never to increase the burdens of this corruptible body which weighs down the soul. Both types of homes and their masters have this in common, that they must use things essential to this mortal life. But the respective purposes to which they put them are characteristic and very different.

So, too, the earthly city which does not live by faith seeks only an earthly peace, and limits the goal of its peace, of its harmony of authority and obedience among its citizens, to the voluntary and collective attainment of objectives necessary to mortal existence. The heavenly City, meanwhile—or, rather, that part that is on pilgrimage in mortal life and lives by faith —must use this earthly peace until such time as our mortality which needs such peace has passed away. As a consequence, so long as her life in the earthly city is that of a captive and

an alien (although she has the promise of ultimate delivery and the gift of the Spirit as a pledge), she has no hesitation about keeping in step with the civil law which governs matters pertaining to our existence here below. For, as mortal life is the same for all, there ought to be common cause between the two cities in what concerns our purely human living.[1]

Now comes the difficulty. The city of this world, to begin with, has had certain 'wise men' of its own mold, whom true religion must reject, because either out of their own daydreaming or out of demonic deception these wise men came to believe that a multiplicity of divinities was allied with human life, with different duties, in some strange arrangement, and different assignments: this one over the body, that one over the mind; in the body itself, one over the head, another over the neck, still others, one for each bodily part; in the mind, one over the intelligence, another over learning, another over temper, another over desire; in the realities, related to life, that lie about us, one over flocks and one over wheat, one over wine, one over oil, and another over forests, one over currency, another over navigation, and still another over warfare and victory, one over marriage, a different one over fecundity and childbirth, so on and so on.

The heavenly City, on the contrary, knows and, by religious faith, believes that it must adore one God alone and serve Him with that complete dedication which the Greeks call *latreía* and which belongs to Him alone. As a result, she has been unable to share with the earthly city a common religious legislation, and has had no choice but to dissent on this score and so to become a nuisance to those who think otherwise. Hence, she has had to feel the weight of their anger, hatred, and violence, save in those instances when,

1 . . . *ut, quoniam communis est ipsa mortalitas, servetur in rebus ad eam pertinentibus inter civitatem utramque concordia.*

by sheer numbers and God's help, which never fails, she has been able to scare off her opponents.

So long, then, as the heavenly City is wayfaring on earth, she invites citizens from all nations and all tongues, and unites them into a single pilgrim band. She takes no issue with that diversity of customs, laws, and traditions whereby human peace is sought and maintained. Instead of nullifying or tearing down, she preserves and appropriates whatever in the diversities of divers races is aimed at one and the same objective of human peace, provided only that they do not stand in the way of the faith and worship of the one supreme and true God.

Thus, the heavenly City, so long as it is wayfaring on earth, not only makes use of earthly peace but fosters and actively pursues along with other human beings a common platform in regard to all that concerns our purely human life and does not interfere with faith and worship.[2] Of course, though, the City of God subordinates this earthly peace to that of heaven. For this is not merely true peace, but, strictly speaking, for any rational creature, the only real peace, since it is, as I said, 'the perfectly ordered and harmonious communion of those who find their joy in God and in one another in God.'

When this peace is reached, man will be no longer haunted by death, but plainly and perpetually endowed with life,[3] nor will his body, which now wastes away and weighs down the soul, be any longer animal, but spiritual, in need of nothing, and completely under the control of our will.

This peace the pilgrim City already possesses by faith and it lives holily and according to this faith so long as, to attain its

2 . . . *et de rebus ad mortalem hominum naturam pertinentibus humanarum voluntatum compositionem, quantum salva pietate ac religione conceditur, tuetur adque adpetit.*

3 . . . *non erit vita mortalis, sed plane certeque vitalis.*

heavenly completion, it refers every good act done for God or for his fellow man. I say 'fellow man' because, of course, any community life must emphasize social relationships.

Chapter 18

Turning now to that distinctive characteristic which Varro ascribes to the followers of the New Academy, namely, universal skepticism, the City of God shuns it as a form of insanity. Its knowledge of truth, gleaned by intelligence and reasoning, is indeed slender because of the corruptible body weighing down the soul. As St. Paul says, 'We know in part.'[1] Still, this knowledge is certain. Believers, moreover, trust the report of their bodily senses which subserve the intelligence. If they are at times deceived, they are at least better off than those who maintain that the senses can never be trusted.

The City of God believes the Old and New Testaments accepted as canonical. Out of these she formulates that faith according to which the just man lives. And in the light of this faith we walk forward without fear of stumbling so long as 'we are exiled from the Lord.'[2] This perfectly certain faith apart, other things which have not been sensibly or intellectually experienced nor clearly revealed in canonical Scripture, nor vouched for by witnesses whom it is reasonable to believe—these we can doubt and nobody in justice can take us to task for this.

Chapter 19

The City of God does not care in the least what kind of dress or social manners a man of faith affects, so long as

1 1 Cor. 13.9.
2 2 Cor. 5.6.

these involve no offense against the divine law. For it is faith and not fashions that brings us to God. Hence, when philosophers become Christians, the Church does not force them to give up their distinctive attire or mode of life which are no obstacle to religion, but only their erroneous teachings. She is entirely indifferent to that special mark which, in Varro's reckoning, distinguishes the Cynics, so long as it connotes nothing shameful or unbalanced.

Or take the three modes of life: the contemplative, the active, the contemplative-active. A man can live the life of faith in any of these three and get to heaven. What is not indifferent is that he love truth and do what charity demands. No man must be so committed to contemplation as, in his contemplation, to give no thought to his neighbor's needs, nor so absorbed in action as to dispense with the contemplation of God.

The attraction of leisure ought not to be empty-headed inactivity, but in the quest or discovery of truth, both for his own progress and for the purpose of sharing ungrudgingly with others. Nor should the man of action love worldly position or power (for all is vanity under the sun), but only what can be properly and usefully accomplished by means of such position and power, in the sense which I have already explained[1] of contributing to the eternal salvation of those committed to one's care. Thus, as St. Paul wrote: 'If anyone is eager for the office of bishop, he desires a good work.'[2] He wanted to make clear that the office of bishop, *episcopatus,* implies work rather than dignity. The word is derived from *episkopos,* which is Greek for 'superintendent.' Thus, a bishop is supposed to superintend those over whom he is set in the sense that he is to 'oversee' or 'look out for' those under him. The word, *skopein,* like the Latin *intendere,* means to look; and

1 Cf. above, 19.6.
2 1 Tim. 3.1.

so *episkopein,* like *superintendere,* means 'to oversee' or 'to look out for those who are under one.' Thus, no man can be a good bishop if he loves his title but not his task.[3]

In the same way, no man is forbidden to pursue knowledge of the truth, for that is the purpose of legitimate leisure. But it is the ambition for the position of dignity which is necessary for government that is unbecoming, although, of course, the dignity itself and its use are not wrong in themselves. Thus, it is the love of study that seeks a holy leisure; and only the compulsion of charity that shoulders necessary activity. If no such burden is placed on one's shoulders, time should be passed in study and contemplation. But, once the burden is on the back, it should be carried, since charity so demands. Even so, however, no one should give up entirely his delight in learning, for the sweetness he once knew may be lost and the burden he bears overwhelm him.

Chapter 20

Meanwhile, and always, the supreme good of the City of God is everlasting and perfect peace and not merely a continuing peace which individually mortal men enter upon and leave by birth and death, but one in which individuals immortally abide, no longer subject to any species of adversity. Nor will anyone deny that such a life must be most happy, or that this life, however blessed spiritually, physically, or economically, is, by comparison, most miserable.

It is true, however, that a man who makes his life here below a means to that end which he ardently loves and confidently hopes for can even now be reasonably called happy—though more in hope than in present happiness. Such present felicity apart from this hope is, to tell the truth, an

3 . . . *qui praeesse dilexerit, non prodesse.*

illusory happiness and, in fact, a great wretchedness, since it makes no use of the true goods of the soul. No wisdom is true wisdom unless all that it decides with prudence, does with fortitude, disciplines with temperance, and distributes with justice is directed to that goal in which God is to be all in all in secure everlastingness and flawless peace.

Chapter 21

I have arrived at the point where I must keep my promise[1] to prove, as briefly and clearly as I can that, if we accept the definitions of Scipio, cited by Cicero in his book *On the Republic*, there never existed any such thing as a Roman Republic.

Scipio gives a short definition of a commonwealth as the weal of the people. Now, if this is a true definition, there never was any Roman Republic, because there never was in Rome any true 'weal of the people.' Scipio defines the people as 'a multitude bound together by a mutual recognition of rights and a mutual co-operation for the common good.' As the discussion progresses, he explains what he means by 'mutual recognition of rights,' going on to show that a republic cannot be managed without justice, for, where there is not true justice, there is no recognition of rights.

For, what is rightly done is justly done; what is done unjustly cannot be done by right. We are not to reckon as right such human laws as are iniquitous, since even unjust lawgivers themselves call a right [*ius*] only what derives from the fountainhead of justice [*iustitia,*] and brand as false the wrong-headed opinion of those who keep saying that a right [*ius*] is whatever is advantageous [*utile*] to the one in power.

It follows that, wherever true justice is lacking, there can-

1 Cf. above, 1.21.

not be a multitude of men bound together by a mutual recognition of rights; consequently, neither can there be a 'people' in the sense of Scipio's definition. Further, if there is no 'people,' there is no weal of the 'people,' or commonwealth, but only the weal of a nondescript mob undeserving of the designation 'the people.' To resume the argument: If a commonwealth is the weal of the people, and if there is no people save one bound together by mutual recognition of rights, and if there are no rights where there is no justice, it follows beyond question that where there is no justice, there is no commonwealth.

Let us see. Justice is the virtue which accords to each and every man what is his due. What, then, shall we say of a man's 'justice' when he takes himself away from the true God and hands himself over to dirty demons? Is this a giving to each what is his due? If a man who takes away a farm from its purchaser and delivers it to another man who has no claim upon it is unjust, how can a man who removes himself from the overlordship of the God who made him and goes into the service of wicked spirits be just?

To be sure, in *On the Republic* there is a hard-fought and powerful debate in favor of justice as against injustice. First, the side of injustice was taken. At that point it was claimed that only by injustice could the republic stand firm and be efficiently managed. And this was put down as the most telling proof: that it is unjust that some men should have to serve others as masters; that, nevertheless, the capital of the Empire to which the commonwealth belongs must practice such injustice or surrender her provinces. Then the side of justice made the following rebuttal: that such procedure is, in fact, just because such submission is advantageous to the men in question, that it is for their good, when such sovereignty is properly managed, that is, when the lawless marauding of criminals is repressed and order established. For, the con-

quered peoples thereafter are better off than they were in liberty.

Next, to bolster this reasoning, a new argument was brought forward in the form of an admirable example taken, so they said, from nature herself: 'Why, otherwise, does God have mastery over man, the mind over the body, reason over lust and the other wrongful movements of the soul?'

Surely, now, this example teaches plainly enough for anyone that it is for the good of some to be in an inferior position, and that it is good for all without exception to be subject to God. The soul that is submissive to God justly lords it over the body; in the soul itself, reason bowing down before its Lord and God justily lords it over lust and every other evil tendency.

Because this is so, what fragment of justice can there be in a man who is not subject to God, if, indeed, it is a fact that such a one cannot rightfully exercise dominion—soul over body, human reason over sinful propensities? And if there is no justice in a man of this kind, then there is certainly no justice, either, in an assembly made up of such men. As a result, there is lacking that mutual recognition of rights which makes a mere mob into a 'people,' a people whose common weal is a commonwealth.

What shall I say of the common good whose common pursuit knits men together into a 'people,' as our definition teaches? Careful scrutiny will show that there is no such good for those who live irreligiously, as all do who serve not God but demons and, particularly, those filthy spirits that are so defiant of God that they look to receive sacrifices as if they were gods. Anyway, what I have said with regard to mutual recognition of rights I consider sufficient to show that, on the basis of the definition itself, a people devoid of justice is not such a people as can constitute a commonwealth.

I am supposing that no one will raise the objection that the

Roman Republic served good and holy gods, and not unclean spirits. Surely, I do not have to repeat the same old arguments which I have so often and so more than sufficiently stated. No one but a thickhead or an irrepressible wrangler can have read all the earlier Books of this work and still doubt that the Romans worshiped evil and dirty demons. In any case, what does it matter to what kind of demons they offered sacrifices? In the law of the true God it is written: 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord.'[2] The dreadful sanction of this command makes it clear that God wanted no sacrifices offered to such gods, good or bad.

Chapter 22

But a man may object: Who is this God of yours, and how do we know that the Romans were obliged to adore Him with sacrifices to the exclusion of other gods? One must be blind indeed to be asking at this late date who our God is! He is the God whose Prophets foretold things we see realized under our very eyes. He is the God who gave the reply to Abraham: 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.'[1] And this promise has been made good in Christ, born in the flesh of Abraham's seed—a fulfillment which those who have remained opposed to Christ's name know so well, though they like it so little. He is the God whose Spirit spoke through Prophets whose predictions are now realized in our visibly world-wide Church and which I quoted in previous Books. He is the God whom Varro, the most learned of Romans, thought was Jupiter, however little he grasped the import of his words. It is at least worth mentioning that a man of his

2 Exod. 22.20.

1 Gen. 22.18.

learning was unable to think of our God as despicable or non-existent. In fact, Varro identified Him with his own conception of the supreme deity.

Finally, our God is the one whom Porphyry, most learned of philosophers and bitter enemy of Christianity, admits to be a great God, and this on the strength of pagan oracles.

Chapter 23

In his work, *Ek logíōn philosophías,* Porphyry brings together in orderly form some so-called 'divine' utterances on theological topics. I quote his words as translated from the Greek: 'Apollo gave this admonition in metre to a client seeking to learn which god he should placate with a view to weaning his wife away from Christianity.' There follow the words which Apollo is supposed to have uttered: 'It would be easier for you to write lasting words in water, or to fly in the air like a bird on weightless wings, than to get back any sense into the head of your corrupted and impious wife. Let her have her way with her empty illusions, and sing her sad, fond songs over her dead god who was condemned by upright judges and, in his lonely years, met the ugliest death, linked with iron.'

Following these verses of Apollo, here translated into prose, Porphyry comments: 'In this oracle Apollo has shown how incurable are the Christians, for it is the Jews, not they, who have regard for God.' See how he smears Christ[1] and puts the Jews ahead of the Christians by saying that they have more regard for God! He takes Apollo's words about Christ being killed by upright judges to mean that their verdict was just and that He got what He deserved. It is not my responsibility to decide whether it was Apollo's lying prophet that

1 . . . *decolorans Christum.*

uttered the words about Christ, which Porphyry swallowed, or whether, possibly, Porphyry made up the whole thing out of whole cloth. Later on we shall have to see how inconsistent Porphyry is or, at least, what a job he has getting his oracles to speak their pieces in unison. What he does say here is that the Jews, as being upholders of God, judged Christ justly when they decreed to torture him in the most ignominious of all deaths. In this case, Porphyry should have lent an ear to what the God of the Jews, to whom he bears witness, has to say: 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord.'[2]

But let us come now to his more candid avowals, and hear how great he makes the God of the Jews out to be. Once again we have a question addressed to Apollo—this time as to the superiority of speech, or reason, or law. 'He replied,' says Porphyry, 'in verse.' Then he gives these verses, including the following—which are enough for my purposes: 'In God the father and king, older than all things, before whom the heavens, the earth, the ocean, and the sightless reaches of hell tremble, before whom the gods themselves quake with fear. For them the law is the Father whom the devout Hebrews hold in profound regard.' Using this oracle, Porphyry makes his god Apollo say that the God of the Hebrews is mighty enough to make the gods themselves quake with fear before Him. Well, in view of the fact that this God is none other than the one who said, 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord,' I am amazed that Porphyry himself did not quake with fear, too, and tremble lest he, in the act of sacrificing to his gods, be done away with.

Truth to tell, though, our philosopher has some good

2 Exod. 22.20.

things to say of Christ. Either he is forgetful of the obloquy of which I have just been speaking, or else it is his gods who cursed Christ in their sleep and then, waking up, realized that He really was good and set out to praise Him becomingly! For he says as something extraordinary and beyond belief: 'What I am about to say is assuredly going to appear as remarkable to some. My gods have pronounced Christ a most religious person, now rendered immortal, and they have spoken very well of him. They say, however, that the Christians themselves are a besmirched and corrupted crew, all tied up in errors. And they have many similar hard things to say of them.'

At this point he cites some divine oracles cursing the Christians. Then, 'Hecate, answering some people who asked her if Christ is God, replied: "You know already that the soul is deathless and journeyeth on after the body. One, however, that is cut off from wisdom wandereth ever. The soul of Christ is the spirit of a man of very great piety. But those who adore it do so in ignorance of the truth." '

Having quoted this so-called oracle, Porphyry weaves this commentary: 'Note that she says he was a most religious man whose spirit, like that of other devout men, has been endowed with immortality after death, and that Christians worship him out of ignorance. In answer to the query, "Why, then, was he condemned to die," the goddess replied, "The body, to be sure, is always up against exhausting torture, but the souls of the devout are enthroned in heaven. The soul you speak of, however, was fated to bring other souls, whom the fates did not will to receive the gods' gifts nor to come to the knowledge of Jupiter the Immortal, into the toils of error. These souls are hateful to the gods because, as they were fated not to know God nor to receive the gods' gifts, he fatefully involved them in error. He himself, however, was a devout man and has gone up into heaven as do all

good men. Accordingly, you will on no account speak ill of him, and you will pity the pathetic madness of these people, inasmuch as they stand unawares in headlong peril." '

I ask: Who is so dull-witted as not to perceive that these oracles were either made up by this clever and implacable enemy of the Christians or were actually uttered by impure demons. In either case, the purpose was the same, namely, by praising Christ to win a confident hearing in their slanderous abuse of His followers, and thus, if possible, to block that road to eternal salvation upon which one who becomes a Christian enters. The demons realize that it falls in well with their astute resourcefulness in doing harm, if they gain credit by praising Christ, and consequent credit in calumniating Christians. In this way they can make a man who swallows both tales the kind of Christ-eulogizer who is loath to be a Christian, with the result that the Christ whom he extols is rendered incapable of setting him free from the domination of the demons. This is all the more true when you reflect that their praise of Christ is so shaped that anyone accepting Christ on their testimony would not be a genuine Christian anyway, but a Photinian heretic who accepts Christ as a man while rejecting Him as God, and thus can neither be saved by Him nor avoid, or escape from, the snares of these lying devils.

For our part, we pay no attention either to Apollo slandering Christ or to Hecate praising Him. The former would have us believe that Christ was a criminal, executed by right-thinking judges; the latter, that he was a sincerely pious man —but merely a man. Both have a single aim, to dissuade men from becoming Christians and thus keep them in the power of the demons.

I have a suggestion. Let Porphyry or, better still, all who swallow these 'oracles' against the Christians first undertake, if they can, to effect agreement between Apollo and Hecate

on the subject of Christ, so that they damn Him in unison or praise Him in unison! Even if they could, we would still shun these demons as ruseful devils whether they praise or blame. Seeing, however, that their damning god and praising goddess disagree concerning Christ, no sensible man will believe them when they curse the Christians.

Now let us examine Porphyry's (or Hecate's) approval of Christ. Assuredly, when he (or she) contends that it was Christ Himself who was the fateful source of His followers' error, he (or she) is supposed to reveal the cause of Christian error. But, before I quote Porphyry's words, I have a question: If Christ caused the Christians to be caught in inevitable error, did He do this deliberately or indeliberately? If deliberately, how can He be just? If indeliberately, how can He be blessed? However, let us hear the causes of this error. 'There exist in certain localities,' says Porphyry, 'certain very small terrestrial spirits who are underlings of the evil demons. The Hebrew sages—of whom Jesus was one according to Apollo's oracle, just cited—taught believers to shun these lesser spirits and dastardly demons and reverence the heavenly spirits, above all, God the Father. I have shown that this is what the gods command when they admonish us to fix our minds on God and adore Him in every place. For all this, ignorant people of irreligious bent who are not fated to receive the gifts of the gods nor to have any conception of Jupiter the Immortal, have paid no heed to the gods and godlike teachers and have dispensed with all the gods, and have revered the banned demons who they should have hated. Pretending to worship God, they do not do what worship calls for. Not that God, the Father of all, needs anything, but it is to our good to worship Him by justice, chastity, and the other virtues, making our whole life a prayer built on seeking him and walking in his footsteps. Seeking purifies, and following divinizes, our affections, by making Him their object.'

This is, indeed, splendid praise of God the Father and a fine statement of the kind of life a man is commanded to live in His honor; and of such praise and such precepts the Jews' prophetic books are full, wherever holy living is mentioned.

When it comes to the Christians, though, Porphyry is as mistaken or as malicious as the demons, his 'gods,' could desire. As if it were difficult for a man to recall the shameful and unseemly business which used to be staged in theatre and temple in honor of these gods, and then contrast the kind of thing read, preached, and listened to in our churches, and the kind of sacrifice we offer to the true God, and thus grasp on which side lies the tearing down and on which side the building up of the good life! Who but a diabolical spirit ever told Porphyry (or inspired him to tell) such a hollow and palpable lie as that Christians do more to reverence than revile the demons whose cult the Jews forbade?

The God of the Hebrew Prophets forbade sacrifices even to those holy angels and heavenly powers whom we in this pilgrimage of mortal life reverence and love as our blessed fellow countrymen. In the Law He gave to the Hebrew people, He thundered these threatening words: 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death.' Moreover, no one could think that this banning of sacrifice affects only those evil and earthly spirits whom Porphyry dubs 'unimportant' or 'lesser' and who are called even in Scripture 'the gods of the Gentiles,' as is perfectly clear in the Septuagint version of Psalm 95: 'For all the gods of the Gentiles are devils.'[3] It was lest anyone might entertain the idea that sacrifice, forbidden to demons, could be offered to all or even some of the heavenly spirits that God added at once: 'save only to the Lord.' This means 'to the Lord and to nobody else.' I add this paraphrase to prevent anyone thinking that the Latin words, *Domino soli,* mean that

3 Ps. 95.5.

to the 'Sun God' sacrifice may be offered. It is the simplest thing in the world to see from the Greek version that such is not the meaning.

This God of the Hebrews, whose greatness even Varro attests, gave a Law to his chosen people, a law written in Hebrew, not an obscure and little-known law, but one that has long been common knowledge among all people. And it is this Law that contains the words: 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord.' What point is there in seeking for further proof in His Law and Prophets concerning this matter? Indeed, there is no need to 'seek' for evidences which are neither rare nor recondite; nor even to collect all those texts that are so many and so manifest, and to quote them here. They make it clearer than daylight that the supreme true God wishes sacrifice to be paid exclusively to Himself. Now, I offer but one statement. It is brief, majestic, terrifying, and true. It was spoken by that very God whom the most distinguished pagan scholars extol so splendidly. Hear it, fear it, heed it, lest death befall you if you disobey. He said: 'He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord,' and that, not because God needs anything, but simply because it is good for us to belong to God alone. For the Hebrews' Scripture sings: 'I have said to the Lord, thou art my God, for thou hast no need of my goods.'[4]

We ourselves, who form His City, are His best and most worthy sacrifice. It is this Mystery which we celebrate in our oblations, so familiar to the faithful, as I have explained already.[5] And it was through the Hebrew Prophets themselves that the divine revelations were given that the symbolic sacrifices of the Jews would one day cease, and that thereafter all races would offer one sacrifice from sunrise to sunset, just as we see for ourselves this very day. But I have already quoted enough of such texts throughout this work.

4 Ps. 15.2, as quoted by Eusebius.
5 Cf. above, 10.6.

To sum up. Where justice is wanting, in the sense that the civil community does not take its orders from the one supreme God, and follow them out with the help of His grace; where sacrifice is offered to any save Him alone; where, consequently, the civil community is not such that everyone obeys God in this respect; where the soul does not control the body, and reason our evil urges, as proper order and faith require; where neither the individuals nor the whole community, 'the people,' live by that faith of the just which works through that charity which loves God as He should be loved and one's neighbor as oneself—where this kind of justice is lacking, I maintain, there does not exist 'a multitude bound together by a mutual recognition of rights and a mutual co-operation for the common good.' This being so, there is no proper 'people'—if Scipio's definition is correct—nor a commonwealth. For, where there is no 'people,' there is no 'people's' weal.

Chapter 24

It is possible to define a 'people' not as Cicero does but as 'a multitude of reasonable beings voluntarily associated in the pursuit of common interests.'[1] In that case, one need only consider what these interests are in order to determine of what kind any particular people may be. Still, whatever these interests are, so long as we have a multitude of rational beings—and not of irresponsible cattle—who are voluntarily associated in the pursuit of common interests, we can reasonably call them a 'people,' and they will be a better or worse people according as the interests which have brought them together are better or worse interests.

This definition certainly makes the Roman people a 'people' and their weal a 'commonwealth' or 'republic.' How-

1 *Populus est coetus multitudinis rationalis rerum quas diligit concordi communione sociatus.*

ever, we know from history what kind of interests this people had, both in primitive times and more recently, and also what kind of morals brought on the rupture and corruption of their voluntary association (which is the health, so to speak, of any community), first, by sanguinary seditions, and, later, by social and civil war. On this subject, I had a good deal to say earlier in this work.[2] However, I would still call the Romans a 'people' and their affairs a 'commonwealth,' so long as they remain a multitude of reasonable beings voluntarily associated in the pursuit of common interests.

Of course, what I have said of the Romans and their Republic applies not less to the Athenians and other Greek communities, to the Egyptians, to the early Assyrians of Babylonia, and, in general, to any other pagan people whose government exercised real political control, however much or little. The fact is that any civil community made up of pagans who are disobedient to God's command that He alone receive sacrifices and who, therefore, are devoid of the rational and religious control of soul over body and of reason over sinful appetite must be lacking in true justice.

Chapter 25

There may seem to be some control of soul over body and of reason over passion, even when soul and reason do not serve God as He demands. Actually, however, there is no such thing. For, what species of control can there be of the body and its bad tendencies if the mistress mind is ignorant of the true God, insubmissive to His authority, and, as a result, a plaything to the corrupting influences of thoroughly evil demons? No, the virtues on which the mind preens itself as

2 Cf. above, 2.18; 3.23-29.

giving control over the body and its urges, and which aim at any other purpose or possession than God, are in point of fact vices rather than virtues.[1]

Although some people claim that virtues are authentic and worthy of the name so long as their end is in themselves and they are not means to something else, even they are spoiled by the puff of pride and must, consequently, be reckoned as vices rather than virtues.

Just as our flesh does not live by its own power but by a power above it, so what gives to a man the life of blessedness derives not from himself, but from a power above him. And this applies not just to man but to every heavenly Power and Domination.

Chapter 26

As the life of the body is the soul, so the 'blessed life' of a man is God. As the sacred writings of the Hebrews have it: 'Happy is that people whose God is the Lord.'[1] Wretched, then, must be any people that is divorced from this God.

Yet, even such a people cherishes a peace of its own which is not to be scorned although in the end it is not to be had because this peace, before the end, was abused. Meanwhile, it is to our advantage that there be such peace in this life. For, as long as the two cities are mingled together, we can make use of the peace of Babylon. Faith can assure our exodus from Babylon, but our pilgrim status, for the time being, makes us neighbors.

All of this was in St. Paul's mind when he advised the Church to pray for this world's kings and high authorities—in

1 Cf. above, 5.12-20.

1 Ps. 143.15.

order that 'we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all piety and worthy behavior.'[2] Jeremias, too, predicting the Babylonian captivity to the Old Testament Jews, gave them orders from God to go submissively and serve their God by such sufferings, and meanwhile to pray for Babylon. 'For in the peace thereof,' he said, 'shall be your peace'[3]—referring, of course, to the peace of this world which the good and bad share in common.

Chapter 27

The City of God, however, has a peace of its own, namely, peace with God in this world by faith and in the world to come by vision. Still, any peace we have on earth, whether the peace we share with Babylon or our own peace through faith, is more like a solace for unhappiness than the joy of beatitude. Even our virtue in this life, genuine as it is because it is referred to the true goal of every good, lies more in the pardoning of sins than in any perfection of virtues. Witness the prayer of God's whole City, wandering on earth and calling out to Him through all her members: 'Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.'[1]

This prayer is effective, not on the lips of those whose faith without works is dead,[2] but only on the lips of men whose faith works through charity.[3] This prayer is necessary for the just because their reason, though subsmissive to God, has only imperfect mastery over their evil inclinations so long as they live in this world and in a corruptible body that 'is a

2 1 Tim. 2.2.
3 Jer. 29.7.

1 Matt. 6.12.
2 Cf. James 2.17.
3 Cf. Gal. 5.6.

load upon the soul.'[4] Reason may give commands, but can exercise no control without a struggle. And, in this time of weakness, something will inevitably creep in to make the best of soldiers—whether in victory or still in battle with such foes—offend by some small slip of the tongue, some passing thought, if not by habitual actions. This explains why we can know no perfect peace so long as there are evil inclinations to master. Those which put up a fight are put down only in perilous conflict; those that are already overcome cannot be kept so if one relaxes, but only at the cost of vigilant control. These are the battles which Scripture sums up in the single phrase: 'The life of man upon earth is a warfare.'[5]

Who, then, save a proud man, will presume that he can live without needing to ask God: 'Forgive us our debts'? Not a great man, you may be sure, but one blown up with the wind of self-reliance—one whom God in His justice resists while He grants His grace to the humble. Hence, it is written: 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'[6]

This, then, in this world, is the life of virtue. When God commands, man obeys; when the soul commands, the body obeys; when reason rules, our passions, even when they fight back, must be conquered or resisted; man must beg God's grace to win merit and the remission of his sins and must thank God for the blessings he receives.

But, in that final peace which is the end and purpose of all virtue here on earth, our nature, made whole by immortality and incorruption, will have no vices and experience no rebellion from within or without. There will be no need for reason to govern non-existent evil inclinations. God will hold sway over man, the soul over the body; and the happiness in eternal life and law will make obedience sweet and easy. And in each

4 Wisd. 9.15.
5 Job. 7.1.
6 James 4.6; 1 Peter 5.5.

and all of us this condition will be everlasting, and we shall know it to be so. That is why the peace of such blessedness or the blessedness of such peace is to be our supreme good.

Chapter 28

On the other hand, the doom in store for those who are not of the City of God is an unending wretchedness that is called 'the second death,' because neither the soul, cut off from the life of God, nor the body, pounded by perpetual pain, can there be said to live at all. And what will make that second death so hard to bear is that there will be no death to end it.

Now, since unhappiness is the reverse of happiness, death of life, and war of peace, one may reasonably ask: If peace is praised and proclaimed as the highest good, what kind of warfare are we to think of as the highest evil? If this inquirer will reflect, he will realize that what is hurtful and destructive in warfare is mutual clash and conflict, and, hence, that no one can imagine a war more unbearably bitter than one in which the will and passions are at such odds that neither can ever win the victory, and in which violent pain and the body's very nature will so clash that neither will ever yield. When this conflict occurs on earth, either pain wins and death puts an end to all feeling, or nature wins and health removes the pain. But, in hell, pain permanently afflicts and nature continues to feel it, for neither ever comes to term, since the punishment must never end.

However, it is through the last judgment that good men achieve that highest good (which all should seek) and evil men that highest evil (which all should shun), and so, as God helps me, I shall discuss that judgment in the Book that comes next.

BOOK TWENTY

Chapter 1

N THIS BOOK, I plan, with God's help, to discuss His day of final judgment and to defend its reality against those who deliberately disbelieve in it. My first duty will be to lay a solid foundation of revealed data. Of those who reject these revelations, some do so on the ground that they deny outright the divine inspiration of Scriptural texts, and others because they try to twist the texts to a different meaning. In both cases, the reasonings are human, specious and false. For there is no human being, I think, who will withold assent, if only he will take these texts at their face value and realize that the holy men who wrote them were inspired by the true and supreme God. Not everyone, of course, will admit this openly—some because they are too ashamed or afraid to make open profession, and others because they are so psychotic in their bullheadedness that they will strain and strive to defend, at all costs, what they know or believe to be false even when reason or faith tells them it is true.

By the last day or time of divine judgment I mean what the whole Church of the true God means when she believes and openly proclaims that Christ will come from heaven to judge the living and the dead. Just how many days this judgment will take we do not know, since even the most casual reader of Scripture knows that the word 'day' is often used for 'time.' And one speaks of 'last' or 'final' in connection with this particular 'day' of divine judgment because, in fact, God is at all times exercising judgment and, therefore, at the present time just as He has been doing from the creation of mankind. For example, He exercised judgment when He expelled our first parents from Eden and drove the perpetrators of the great sin far from the tree of life. And God exercised judgment when He refused to spare the angels who sinned and, especially, their leader who was the cause, by choice, of his own fall and, by envy and hatred, the cause of the fall of man. Nor is it without God's high and just judgment that the life of the demons in the air and of men on earth is so miserable, so full of ignorance and anguish. And even had there been no sin to punish, there would have been a place for God's good and righteous judgment in rewarding with eternal felicity all of His national creatures who cling in constancy to Him as Lord.

God judges men and angels not only as groups that deserve wretchedness as the wages of the original sin, but also as individuals who have freely chosen to do what each has done. When the demons beseech God not to torture them, He may quite justily be more sparing to one and more severe with another according to individual wickedness. So, too, human beings—whether manifestly or hiddenly, whether in this life or later—pay a divinely assessed penalty, each for his or her own personal wrong-doing. And it is right to speak of penalty and reward even though no positively good action can be done without divine help, and although there can be no sin of man or angel without a divine permission which is at the same time a perfectly just judgment. For, as St. Paul says in

one place: 'Is there injustice with God? By no means!'[1] Again he says: 'How incomprehensible are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!'[2]

In this Book, however, as God permits, I shall not discuss God's first judgment nor those other judgments which are past nor those that go on today, but only that last judgment when Christ will come from heaven to judge the living and the dead. This will be a day of judgment in the precise sense that there will be no place for any uncomprehending complaint that this sinner has been blessed or that that good man has been punished. On that day, we shall see plainly the true fullness of felicity of all the saints and only of the saints, as we shall see the supreme and deserved misery of the wicked and of the wicked alone.

Chapter 2

While time lasts, however, we are schooled to bear misfortune calmly, for good and bad men without distinction have to bear it; and we set no great store by prosperity, since bad and good men alike may come to enjoy it. So it is that, even in these temporal vicissitudes where God's justice is not apparent, divine Revelation must save us from confusion.

We cannot know, for example, what secret decree of God's justice makes this good man poor and that bad man rich; why this man, whose immoral life should cause him, in our estimation, to be torn with grief, is, in point of fact, quite happy; why that man, whose praiseworthy life should bring him joy, is, in fact, sad of soul; why this innocent party leaves the courtroom not just unavenged but actually condemned, unfairly treated by a corrupt judge or overwhelmed by lying

1 Rom. 9.14.
2 Rom. 11.33.

testimony, while his guilty opponent not merely gets off unpunished but goes gloating over his vindication. Here we have an irreligious man in excellent health, there a holy man wasting away to a shadow with disease. Here are some young men, robbers by profession, in superb physical fettle; there, some mere babies, unable to harm anyone even in speech, afflicted with various kinds of implacable disease. A very much needed man is swept off by untimely death; a man who, we think, should not even have been born survives him and lives a long life. One man loaded with crimes is lifted to honors, while another whose life is beyond reproach lives under a cloud of suspicion. And so of innumerable other examples.

It would be intelligible if there were only some consistency in the seeming senselessness of these arrangements. But in this world, where man, as the inspired psalm says, 'is like to vanity; his days pass away like a shadow,'[1] it is not only bad men who enjoy the passing boons of this earth, and it is not only good men who suffer misfortunes. If it were always the case that those who are not going to attain the eternal blessings of beatitude should have the temporal ones, whether in the form of solaces from God's mercy or even as illusory goods to deceive them, and if those not destined to suffer eternally were consistently to have temporal misfortunes, whether in the form of chastisement corresponding to their sins, or in the form of spiritual testings for the attainment of virtue, this consistency might be traced to a just or merciful judgment of God. But it is sometimes not so obvious as all this, for not only are the good sometimes unfortunate and the wicked fortunate—a seeming injustice—but, as often as not, bad luck befalls bad men and good luck good men. The whole arrangement makes God's judgments all the more inscrutable and His ways unsearchable.

Accordingly, even though we cannot understand what kind

1 Ps. 143.4.

of divine judgment can positively or even permissively will such inequalities—since God is omnipotent, all-wise, all-just, and in no way weak, rash, or unfair—it is still good for our souls to learn to attach no importance to the good or ill fortune which we see visited without distinction upon the good and the bad. We learn, too, to seek the good things that are meant for the good, and to avoid at all costs the evil things that are fit for the bad.

When, however, we come to that judgment of God the proper name of which is 'judgment day' or 'the day of the Lord,' we shall see that all His judgments are perfectly just: those reserved for that occasion, all those that He had made from the beginning, and those, too, He is to make between now and then. Then, too, it will be shown plainly how just is that divine decree which makes practically all of God's judgments lie beyond the present understanding of men's mind, even though devout men may know by faith that God's hidden judgments are most surely just.

Chapter 3

It was with this truth in mind that Solomon, the wise king of Israel, penned the opening words of Ecclesiastes, a book which the Jews also consider canonical. He wrote: 'Vanity of vanities, said Ecclesiastes; vanity of vanities, and all is vanity. What hath a man more of all his labor, that he taketh under the sun?'[1] Then, using this idea as a unifying theme, he goes on to cite as examples the variety of error and anguish in this mortal life, the swift, empty flight of time in which nothing can stand or stay. And, in all of this worldly emptiness, he seems to bemoan the fact that, although wisdom outmatches folly as far as light does darkness, and although the sage walks

1 Eccle. 1.2.

with his eyes open and the fool in the dark, nevertheless both are exposed to the same onslaughts of fortune. What he means, of course, is what all of us know by experience, namely, that in earthly life misfortune comes to good men and bad men alike. He says, moreover, that good men suffer as if they were bad men, and bad men prosper as if they were good men. Here are his words: 'There is also another vanity which is done upon the earth. There are just men to whom evils happen, as though they had done the works of the wicked; and there are wicked men who are as secure, as though they had done the deeds of the just; but this also I judge most vain.'[2] In fact, Solomon gives over the entire book of Ecclesiastes to suggesting, with such fullness as he judged adequate, the emptiness of this life, with the ultimate objective, to be sure, of making us yearn for another kind of life which is no unsubstantial shadow under the sun, but substantial reality under the sun's Creator. For, man himself becomes as insubstantial as the insubstantiality that surrounds him, and it is by God's righteous decree that he, too, must pass away like a shadow.

In the very days of his life among shadows, however, it makes a great difference whether he submits to, or stands against, the truth; whether he is endowed with or devoid of genuine faith. This difference is not a matter of getting the good things or escaping the misfortunes of this life, all of which alike are fleeting, but it concerns the judgment to come, when blessings are to be the abiding lot of good men, and misery of bad men, alike everlastingly.

The following is the admonition with which Solomon ends his book: 'Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is all man; and all things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every error, whether it be good or evil.'[3] 'Fear

2 Eccle. 8.14.
3 Eccle. 12.13.

God,' he says, 'and keep his commandments; for this is all man.' What could be briefer, truer, better for the soul to know? For this is all a man is—a keeper of God's commandments. Not being such, he is, so to say, nothing at all, because instead of being constantly reshaped to the image of the truth, he remains bogged down in the likeness of shadow. 'And all things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every despised person, whether it be good or evil.' 'Every despised person' means any and every man who seems negligible here on earth and not to be reckoned with. God sees him, however, and neither looks down upon him now nor will pass him by in His judgment.

Chapter 4

With respect to those texts of Scripture which I plan to quote and which concern God's final judgment, I shall single out first those of the New Testament, and afterwards those of the Old. The texts of the Old Testament are anterior chronologically, but those of the New come first in dignity, precisely because the texts in the Old Testament herald those in the New. This, then, is to be my procedure: New Testament first, then the Old in order to confirm more solidly the texts of the New.

In the Old Testament we have the Law and the Prophets; in the New, the Gospels and writings of the Apostles. Among the latter, St. Paul has this to say: 'Through law comes the recognition of sin. But now the justice of God has been made manifest independently of the Law, being attested by the Law and the Prophets; the justice of God through faith in Jesus Christ upon all who believe.'[1] Now, this 'justice of God' belongs to the New Testament and is 'attested' by the

1 Rom. 3.20-22.

Old, that is, by the Law and the Prophets. First, therefore, I must present my case and then produce my witnesses. Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself indicated that such is the procedure to be followed, when He said: 'So then, every Scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings forth from his storeroom things new and old.'[2] Note that He did not say 'old and new,' which is exactly what He would have said had He not given preferential precedence to quality over antiquity.

Chapter 5

Now, then, to the matter in hand. When our Saviour was rebuking the cities in which He had performed great miracles without their believing in Him, and was putting foreign cities ahead of them, He said: 'But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you;'[1] and a little further on, addressing another city, He said: 'But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for thee.'[2] In this text He makes it perfectly clear that the judgment day is to come. In another passage we find: 'The men of Nineve will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.'[3]

2 Matt. 13.52.

1 Matt. 11.22.
2 Matt. 11.24.
3 Matt. 12.41,42.

This text teaches us two things: first, that judgment will come; second, that it will be accompanied by the resurrection of the dead. For, at the time Christ spoke these words concerning the men of Nineve and the queen of the south He was speaking, of course, about people who had died. And He foretold that these very people would rise again on judgment day. When He said 'They will condemn,' He did not mean that they would sit in judgment, but only that the other people in question, by comparison with these, will be deservedly damned.

Again, in another passage, when He was talking about the present intermingling of good and bad men, and the future winnowing out which is to take place on judgment day, He made use of a parable about wheat sown and weeds oversown. Explaining this parable to His disciples, He said: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed, the sons of the kingdom; the weeds, the sons of the wicked one; and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. But the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered up and burnt with fire, so will it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all scandals and whose who work iniquity, and cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the just will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'[4] In this text, it is true, Christ does not use the words 'judgment' or 'judgment day.' He nevertheless sets forth the reality far more clearly, by means of these descriptions, than if He had done so, and He foretells that judgment is to come at the end of the world.

On still another occasion He said to His disciples: 'Amen I say to you that you who have followed me, in the regene-

4 Matt. 13.37-43.

ration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'[5] This text teaches us that Jesus (together with His disciples) is to judge. The same is indicated in another passage where He told the Jews: 'And if I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.'[6]

Now, we are not to think that, in view of the twelve thrones on which they are to sit, these twelve men alone are to sit in judgment. This number twelve simply stands for some integral fullness of judges, made up as it is of two constituents of seven—a number which generally stands for the whole. Take these two constituents, namely three and four. One multiplied by the other gives us twelve, for four times three and three times four equal twelve. And there may be still other relevant meanings in this number twelve.

If we insist on the literal meaning of 'twelve,' given the fact that the Apostle Matthias was chosen to fill the vacancy left by the traitor Judas, St. Paul who worked harder than any other Apostle would have no judgment seat to sit upon. Yet, he makes it unmistakably clear that he, too, along with the rest of the saints, belongs to the complement of judges, where he says: 'Do you not know that we shall judge angels?'[7]

This number twelve demands similar interpretation with regard to the subjects of the judgment, too. For, we are not to infer from the words, 'Judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' that the thirteenth tribe, Levi's, will escape unjudged, or that the Apostles will judge only the Jews and not all other races as well. As for the phrase, 'in the regeneration,' beyond question Christ wanted us to understand this expression as standing for the resurrection of the dead. For, as our souls are regene-

5 Matt. 19.28.
6 Matt. 12.27.
7 1 Cor. 15.10.

rated by faith, our bodies are to be regenerated by incorruptibility.

I am passing by many texts which seem to speak of the last judgment in such wise that when you examine them carefully they are found to be ambiguous or mainly concerned with some other matter. This may be that 'coming' of the Saviour whereby throughout history He continues to come into His Church, that is, into His members, one by one and little by little, for the whole Church is His Body; or the reference may be to the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem. When He speaks of the latter, for example, He usually speaks as if He were talking about the end of the world and the great last day of judgment. This is so much the case that it is utterly impossible to know which of the two themes is in His mind unless we bring together for comparison all the relevant texts in the three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. One Evangelist puts down rather obscurely what another puts down more clearly, so that the relevance of the verses becomes clear when you bring together all the passages bearing on a common theme. This is what I tried to do, in a reply I wrote to Hesychius, of blessed memory, Bishop of Salona. The title of my letter was: 'Concerning the end of the world.'

One passage, however, I shall quote here, namely, the passage in St. Matthew's Gospel which has to do with the sorting out of good and bad men in Christ's last and personally pronounced judgment:

'But when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory; and before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on his right hand: Come, blessed of my Father, take possession

of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me; sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me. Then the just will answer him, saying: Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and feed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger, and take thee in; or naked, and clothe thee? Or when did we see thee sick, or in prison, and come to thee? And answering, the king will say to them: Amen I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me. Then he will say to those on his left hand: Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'[8]

In the rest of the passage Christ tells those on His left hand that they had left undone what those on His right hand had done; and when He was asked when they had seen Him in any of these needs, He replied that what they had failed to do for the least of His little ones they had failed to do for Him. He ended with these words: 'And these will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life.'

John the Evangelist tells us with perfect plainness that Christ foretold that judgment was to come at the time of the resurrection of the dead. For, after Christ had said: 'For neither does the Father judge any man, but all judgment he has given to the Son, that all men may honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent him,' He went on without pause to say: 'Amen, amen I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes him who sent me, has life everlasting, and does not come to judgment but has passed from death to life.'[9] Here we have Christ saying that His faithful ones are not to come to judg-

8 Matt. 25.31-46.
9 John 5.22.

ment. How, then, will they, by the judgment, be sorted out from the bad, to stand at His right hand? The answer is that in this passage judgment means condemnation; and you may be sure that those who hear His word and believe in Him who sent Him are never to suffer condemnation.

Chapter 6

Next, Christ goes on to say: 'Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is here, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live. For as the Father has life in himself, even so he has given to the Son also to have life in himself.'[1] In this text He is not yet speaking of the second resurrection, the corporeal one, which is to come at the end of the world, but of the first which takes place here and now. It was precisely to set apart the latter that He said: 'The hour is coming, and now is here'—surely, a resurrection of souls, not of bodies. For souls, too, have their own sort of death in ungodliness and sin. This was the kind of death those had died of whom our Lord said: 'Leave the dead to bury their own dead'[2]—meaning, of course, that the spiritually dead were to bury the corporeally dead.

Thus, it was on account of the former—men dead of soul because of godlessness and sin—that He said: 'The hour is coming, and now is here, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live.' 'Those who hear' means those who shall obey and believe and persevere to the end. Nor did Christ in this text make any distinction between good men and bad men. It is good for all to hear His voice and to come alive by passing over from the death of sin to the life of grace. It was of this death in sin that

1 John 5.25.
2 Matt. 8.22.

Paul said: 'Therefore all died; and Christ died for all, in order that they who are alive may live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and rose again.'[3]

All men, consequently, without a single exception, were dead through sin, original sin or original with personal sin superadded, either by ignorance of, or conscious refusal to do, what is right. And for all these dead souls one living man died—a man utterly free from sin—with the intention that those who come alive by forgiveness of their sins live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for all on account of our sins, and rose again for our justification. All this was to the end that, believing in Him 'who justifies the impious,'[4] we might be rescued from unbelief like men quickened out of death and belong to the first resurrection which is here and now. For, no one belongs to the first save those who are to be blessed forever. To the second, however, of which Christ is about to speak, belong both the blessed and the damned, as He teaches us. The first resurrection is a resurrection of mercy; the last is to be a resurrection of judgment. Hence the psalm says: 'Mercy and judgment I will sing to thee, O Lord.'[5]

It was of this last judgment that Christ spoke next: 'And he has granted him power to render judgment, because he is Son of Man.'[6] This passage shows that He will come to judge in that very flesh in which He came to be judged. For such is the sense of the clause, 'because he is Son of Man.'

Continuing, Christ spoke of that judgment which is our present theme: 'Do not wonder at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life; but they who have done

3 2 Cor. 5.14,15.
4 Rom. 4.5.
5 Ps. 100.1.
6 John 5.27.

evil unto resurrection of judgment.'[7] Here, 'judgment' stands for 'condemnation,' as in those words of Christ already quoted: 'He who hears my word, and believes him who sent me, has life everlasting, and does not come to judgment, but has passed from death to life.' This means that a man belonging to the first resurrection, that is, one who now passes from death to life will not come to damnation or to 'judgment,' as this text has it. So, too, in the text above, 'but they who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment,' 'judgment' means condemnation.

Consequently, let any man who does not want to be damned in the second resurrection take good care to rise in the first. For, 'The hour is coming, and now is here, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live.' That is, these men shall not come to that condemnation which is called the second death. After the second and bodily resurrection, all those are to be plunged headlong into the second death who do not rise in the first and spiritual resurrection. 'For the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth.' Notice the absence of the 'now is here,' because this 'hour' is to come at the end of the world, in God's last and greatest judgment. Notice, too, that Christ did not add, as in the previous text, 'And those who hear shall live,' because not all shall live—not, at least with that kind of life, which, because it is blessed, alone deserves the name of life. Of course, even these people will have to have some sort of life in order to be able to hear the voice and to come out of their tombs in their resurrected flesh.

The reason why not all shall live, moreover, the Lord teaches us in the sequel: 'And they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life' (these shall live); 'but they who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment' (these

7 John 5.28.

shall not live, but die the second death). They did evil, to be sure, because they lived evil lives; they lived evil lives, because they either never came alive in the present first resurrection, or, having come alive, they failed to abide in their new-gotten life unto the end.

To conclude, then, just as there are the two rebirths, of which I spoke earlier—one in time by faith and baptism, the other in the last judgment by the incorruptibility and immortality of the flesh—so there are two resurrections, the first of which is temporal and spiritual and allows no second death, while the other is not spiritual but corporeal and is to be at the end of time. This resurrection, through the last judgment, will send some into the second death, others into that life which knows no death.

Chapter 7

In the Apocalypse, John the Evangelist speaks further of those two resurrections—in such a manner, however, that some Catholics, not understanding the first of the pair, have gone so far even as to distort the reality into absurd fancies. Here is the text from the book in question:

'And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he cast him into the abyss, closed and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished. And after that he must be let loose for a little while. And I saw thrones, and men sat upon them and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the witness to Jesus and because of the word of God, and who did not worship the beast or his

image, and did not accept his mark upon their foreheads or upon their hands. And they came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection! Over these the second death has no power; but they will be priests of God and Christ, and will reign with him a thousand years.'[1]

Now, those who, on the strength of this passage, got the notion that the first resurrection was to be a bodily one, were influenced in this direction mainly by the matter of the thousand years. The notion was that the saints were destined to enjoy so protracted a sabbath of repose, a holy leisure, that is, after the labors of the six thousand years stretching from the creation of man, his great sin and merited expulsion from the happiness of paradise into the unhappiness of this mortal life. The interpretation was worked out in the light of the Scripture text: 'One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'[2] Thus, there was supposed to follow upon the six thousand years taken as six days a seventh day or sabbath taking up the last thousand, and to be given over to the resurrecting saints for celebration.

One might put up with such an interpretation if it included belief in some spiritual delights accruing to the saints from the Lord's company during that sabbath rest. In fact, I myself at one time accepted such an opinion.[3] But when these interpreters say that the rising saints are to spend their time in limitless gormandizing with such heaps of food and drink as not only go beyond all sense of decent restraint but go utterly beyond belief, then such an interpretation becomes wholly unacceptable save to the carnal-minded. But the spiritual-

1 Apoc. 20.1-6.
2 2 Pet. 3.8.
3 Sermon 259.

minded term those who can swallow the literal interpretation of the 'thousand years' Chiliasts (from the Greek, *chilias,* a thousand) or Millenarians (from the corresponding Latin word). To refute them point by point would take too long. My present obligation will be, rather, to show how the Scriptural passage in question ought to be understood.

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself said: 'No one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man,'[4] meaning by this 'strong man' the Devil who was able to hold the human race in bondage; and by his 'goods,' which Christ was to 'plunder,' His faithful-ones-to-be whom the Devil was keeping for himself because of their ungodliness and various sins. It was for the purpose of binding this strong man that John, in the Apocalypse, saw 'an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.' The angel, that is, checked and repressed his power to seduce and possess those destined to be set free.

Now, the 'thousand years' can, so far as I can see, be interpreted in one of two ways. One interpretation is that this event is to take place in the sixth and last millennium (the sixth 'day'), the latter span of which is now passing, and that when St. John spoke of the last part of this millennium as 'a thousand years' he was using, figuratively, the whole to indicate a part. (After this 'sixth day' will come the 'sabbath' that has no evening, namely, the endless repose of the blessed.) The other interpretation makes the 'thousand years' stand for all the years of the Christian era, a perfect number being used to indicate the 'fullness of time.'[5] For the number one thousand is the cube of ten. Ten times ten equals one

4 Mark 3.27.
5 Cf. Gal. 4.4: 'When the fullness of time came, God sent his Son.'

hundred, which is already a square, but still a plane, figure; to give it depth and make it a cube, one hundred is further multiplied by ten to make a thousand. Now, it is true that the number one hundred is sometimes made to stand for 'all.' Thus, our Lord promised to anyone leaving all things to follow Him: 'He shall receive a hundredfold.'[6] One may say that St. Paul explains this in the words, 'As having nothing yet possessing all things,'[7] taken in connection with an earlier text: 'All the world's riches belong to the man of faith.'[8] How much more properly, then, does the number one thousand stand for the whole, since it is the cube, whereas one hundred is only the square, of ten? In the same way there is no better interpretation of the text, 'He hath remembered his covenant for ever: the word which he commanded to a thousand generations,'[9] than to take 'a thousand' as meaning 'all' generations.

'And he cast him into the abyss,' says St. John. To be sure, the Devil was cast into the 'abyss,' taken in the sense of the countless number of godless men whose bitter hatred of God's Church comes from the abysmal depths of their hearts. The Devil was cast into those hearts, not in the sense that he was not there before, but because, in proportion as he has been more and more shut out from believing hearts, he has taken still deeper hold upon unbelievers. It is bad enough to be a stranger to God, but gratuitously to hate God's servants is to have the Devil's hold take even deeper root.

'And closed and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished.' The words 'closed it over him' mean that the angel rendered him powerless to escape, that is, forbade him to go beyond bounds. The further verb, 'sealed,' means, I think,

6 Matt. 19.29.
7 2 Cor. 6.10.
8 Cf. Prov. 17.6 (Septuagint).
9 Ps. 104.8.

that the angel wanted no one to know the secret of who is on the Devil's side and who is not. For, to be sure, this secret division is absolutely unknowable in this world of time, inasmuch as we have no certainty whether the man who is now upright is going to fall, and the one who is now lying flat is going to rise to righteousness.

The nations or men freed from the Devil's seductions, in virtue of this restraining and disabling chaining and imprisonment, are those whom he used to lead astray and hold captive, but who now belong to Christ. For God chose, before the world was made, to rescue these men from the power of darkness and the transfer them into the kingdom of his beloved Son, as St. Paul says.[10] With respect to other men not predestined to eternal life, the Devil continues to this very day to lead these men astray and to drag them down into eternal damnation, as every believer knows.

And these assertions are not shaken by the fact that the Devil often seduces those men, too, who have been reborn in Christ and walk in the ways of God. For 'The Lord knows who are his.'[11] Of these chosen ones the Devil seduces no one to the point of eternal damnation. For, the Lord's knowledge of His elect is a divine knowledge and perfect foreknowledge, wholly unlike the knowledge a man has of his fellow man. Even at the moment of looking, a man can hardly see another man, since he does not see his heart, and he has no foresight at all of how anyone, including himself, is going to turn out in the future.

The reason, therefore, why the Devil is bound and cast into the abyss is to prevent his deceiving the nations that now make up the Church as he used to deceive and possess them before they became the Church. The text does not say that he may not deceive this man or that man, but only 'that he should

10 Cf. Eph. 1.4; Col. 1.13.
11 2 Tim. 2.19.

deceive the nations' (meaning, without doubt, the Church) 'no more until the thousand years should be finished.' The 'thousand years' may mean either what remains of the thousand years that make up the 'sixth day' or the entire course of time this world has still to go.

Notice that the word 'until' in the text just quoted does not mean that *after* the millennium, when the Devil is no longer bound and locked up, he is going to deceive precisely those nations which make up the predestined Church, and which he was prevented from seducing. More likely, the word 'until' is here used as it is sometimes found in Scripture, for instance, in the psalm: 'So are our eyes unto the Lord our God, until he have mercy on us,'[12] where the word 'until' does not imply that, after the Lord does have mercy, His servants' eyes will be no longer turned on him. Or, if the word 'until' is not thus used, then, certainly, the proper sequence of words in St. John's text is as follows: 'And closed and sealed it over him until the thousand years should be finished.' Thus, the interjected clause, 'that he should deceive the nations no more,' would be understood apart from this consecution of ideas, just as if it were put at the end of the sentence. Thus, the whole sentence would read: 'And closed and sealed it over him, until the thousand years should be finished, that he should deceive the nations no more.' The sense, in this sequence, becomes: The angel closed the abyss until the thousand years should be finished, to the express end that the Devil might no longer deceive the nations.

Chapter 8

St. John continues: 'And after that he must be let loose for a little while.' Now, if the tying up and shutting in of

12 Ps. 122.2.

the Devil mean that he cannot deceive the Church, does it follow that his loosing means he will be empowered to do so later on? God forbid! Never shall he lead astray that Church of which it was said, 'The Lord knows who are his,' the Church chosen and predestined before the world's foundation, and I say this even though the Church will be on earth at the time of his loosing just as she has been from her founding and at all times will be, namely, in her contemporaneous members, as they are born to replace those who die. This much is obvious from what the text, a little later, goes on to say, namely, how the Devil is to draw into world-wide war against her the nations whom he is to deceive, foes as countless as the sands of the sea. 'And they went up over the breadth of the earth and encompassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city. And fire from God came down out of heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where there was also the beast and the false prophet; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'[1] This text, obviously, concerns the last judgment. But I decided to quote it here to forestall anyone's thinking that, during the brief interval of the Devil's freedom, the Church will not be on earth, or that he will not find her on earth when he is unbound, or that he will finish her off with all-out persecution.

To conclude: The Devil is bound throughout the entire period covered by this Book—from Christ's first coming to His second coming at the end of the world—but not bound in such a way that this special binding during the period which St. John calls the 'thousand years' implies his powerlessness to deceive the Church. It is clear when one reflects that, even when he *is* loosed, he will not be enabled to do so. There is the argument: If his chaining means that he has no power or no permission to deceive, then his loosing means that he will

1 Apoc. 20.8-10.

have power or permission to deceive. But, of course, such a possibility is unthinkable. No, the binding up of the Devil means this: that he is not allowed to exercise his full powers in tempting or deceiving men by violence or fraud, in driving them or tricking them into his camp by main force, or by lying fallacies. If he were allowed this freedom over such a long period, given the weakness of many men, a number of people, whom God wills to protect from such onslaught, would be affected. He would cause many to fall from the faith and keep others from coming to believe. To prevent his doing just this, he has been chained.

When he is let loose at last, there will be little time left, since, as we read, he and his will rage with the fullness of strength only for three years and six months. Moreover, the men upon whom he will make war are to be such men as will be beyond overpowering by his open attack or hidden ambush.

If he were never set free, the full measure of his malevolent power would never be known, nor would the full measure of the holy City's staunchness under fire be put to the test. Likewise, we would not have a full view of the good use to which Almighty God puts the Devil's great wickedness: for example, how God allows him, even though driven from the saints' inmost hearts which cling to God in faith to tempt the saints somewhat so that they may profit by these external assaults; how God, further, has bound him in those who belong to his camp, to make it impossible for him to spill out and set to work such quantities of his evil power as would topple down countless weak souls destined to increase and fill the Church. These include already believing men whose constancy the Devil would smash, and men destined to believe whom he would frighten from the faith. At last, God will loose him to the end that all men may see how mighty a foe God's City had overcome—all to the immense glory of her Liberator, Helper, Redeemer. When I think how terrible an enemy is

to be unleashed for the last testing of the constant holy men of that day—an enemy with whom, even when he is bound, we wage war so perilously—I ask, what kind of people we are by comparison? Yet I am sure that, even in this meantime, there have been and are some soldiers of Christ so wise and strong that, were they living even in the day of Satan's liberty, their perfect prudence would foil his traps and their fortitude bear the brunt of his attacks.

The Devil's binding has been a fact from the day the Church began to expand beyond Judea into nation after nation. What is more, this binding is a present fact, and will continue until his liberation at the end of the world. The Devil is bound whenever men are converted to the faith from the infidelity in which he possessed them, and there will certainly be conversions until the end of time. For each such convert, plundered, as it were, like goods from the 'strong man's house,' Satan is bound. On the other hand, the 'abyss' in which he is cast includes not only those who were already dead when Satan was first chained, for the process of birth has added to these and will continue to add to them until the end of the world, but it includes all haters of Christians into the depths of whose dark hearts, as into an abyss, day after day, the Devil is cast.

However, it may be asked whether, during the last three years and a half in which the unleashed Devil will stage his all-out offensive, any one of these haters is to turn at last to the faith he formerly spurned? Think of the text: 'How can anyone enter the strong man's house, and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?'[2] How can these words remain true if the Devil can be dispossessed just as well when he is loosed? The text seems to compel us to believe that the brief interval in question will witness no new conversions to Christianity, but that the Devil will do battle only with those

2 Matt. 12.29.

who are already Christians at the time of his unleashing—and, of course, any whom he may win over to his side will not have been numbered among the predestined sons of God. On this last point, John who wrote this Apocalypse wrote significantly in his Epistle: 'They have gone forth from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would surely have continued with us.'[3]

What, then, of the little children? It is quite unthinkable that the time of the Devil's unleashing will find all infant children born of Christian parents already baptized; nor can one suppose that no children will be born during the very interval of his freedom. It is equally unthinkable that, assuming there will be some such, their parents will not somehow manage to get their babies baptized. Yet, how can this be, if it remains true that no one can enter the Devil's house and plunder his goods without having first bound him?

Here is what we should believe. The era in question will witness both defections from, and accretions to, the Church; parents will be so resolute to procure baptism for their babies and new converts will be so strong in their faith that they will vanquish the strong man even unbound. They will overcome his unprecedented, all-out suggestions and aggressions by alertly detecting the former and bravely withstanding the latter. In this way they will despoil him, unchained though he be.

Believing this, we do not render meaningless the Gospel's words: 'How can anyone enter the strong man's house, and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man?' The truth of the text is preserved in the following sequence of events: first, the Devil is bound and plundered; then, out of his former victims, the Church is built up in every place and people with members, some weak, some strong; lastly, her faith grows so rugged on the evidences of divine prophecy

3 1 John 2.19.

fulfilled that she will be able to dispossess him even when he is bound no longer. Just as we have to admit that when iniquity abounds, when the unchained Devil foments his last and greatest persecutions and deceptions, the charity of many, not inscribed in the book of life, will grow frigid and fail, so we must be persuaded that, alongside the good believers which that interval will overtake, there will be others, hitherto outsiders, brought to the faith by God's helping grace and study of the Scriptural predictions of those very events and of the end of the world they feel impending. These will believe what they did not believe before, and so strongly that they will be able to conquer even the unleashed Devil. If such is to be the case, when our text asks: 'How can anyone enter the strong man's house, and plunder his goods unless he first binds the strong man?'[4] then our texts demand that the Devil first of all be bound so that, once he is bound, he may be plundered afterwards even when he is bound no longer.

Chapter 9

During the 'thousand years' when the Devil is bound, the saints also reign for a 'thousand years'[1] and, doubtless, the two periods are identical and mean the span between Christ's first and second coming. For, not only in that future kingdom to which Christ referred in the words, 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you,'[2] but even now those saints reign with Him in some authentic though vastly inferior fashion to whom He said: 'Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world.'[3] Otherwise, the Church in her temporal stage could

1 Apoc. 20.2,4.
2 Matt. 25.34.
3 Matt. 28.20.

not be spoken of as the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of heaven.

This, to be sure, is the period in which the scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven brings forth from his storeroom things new and old, as I mentioned above.[4] So, too, the reapers are to gather up out of the Church the weeds which He allows to grow intermixed with the wheat up to the time of harvest. Christ, explaining this parable, said: 'The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered up and burnt with fire, so will it be at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all scandals.'[5] This certainly cannot be the kingdom that is to be utterly without scandals. The kingdom from which scandals are gathered out, then, must be the Church on earth.

Again, Christ says: 'Therefore, whoever does away with one of these least commandments, and so teaches men, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever carries them out and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'[6] This text places both types in the kingdom of heaven: the man who does not practice what he preaches (for 'to do away with' means not to observe, not to practice), and the man who practices what he preaches; the former, to be reckoned least, the latter, to be reckoned great. And Christ goes on at once to add: 'For I say to you that unless your justice exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees,' those who do away with their own teaching (as He says in another passage: 'They talk but do nothing'[7])—unless your justice exceeds, to the end that you practice what you preach, 'you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'

In this text there are surely two kinds of 'kingdom of hea-

4 Cf. above, 20.4.
5 Matt. 13.39-41.
6 Matt. 5.19.
7 Matt. 23.3.

ven': one embracing both the 'least ' teacher who does not practice and the 'great' teacher who does practice what he preaches; and a different kingdom, open only to him who practices. This makes it clear that the mixed kingdom must be the Church, such as she exists in her temporal stage, while the unmixed kingdom is the Church such as she will be when she is to contain no evil-doer. Consequently, the Church, even in this world, here and now, is the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of heaven. Here and now Christ's saints reign with Him, although not in the way they are destined to reign hereafter; but the 'weeds' do not reign with Him, even now, though they grow along with the 'wheat' in the Church. The only ones who reign with Him are those who follow out St. Paul's prescription: 'Therefore, if you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are on earth[8]—those of whom Paul says in another place that their 'citizenship is in heaven.'[9] Those alone reign with Christ whose presence in His kingdom is such that they themselves *are* His kingdom; for, of course, we cannot call the 'kingdom of Christ' such men as happen to be in it, and will be until all scandals are to be gathered out from it at the world's end, but who seek in it 'their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.'[10]

Now, it is of this militant stage of the kingdom, during which there is still war with our enemy, alternating victory over, and defeat before, our evil inclinations, that the Apocalypse speaks. The 'thousand years' are to last until we come to that kingdom, free of the foe, where the saints reign in fullest peace. And the text also speaks of the 'first resurrection' as being here and now. After mentioning the Devil's chaining

8 Col. 3.1,2.
9 Phil. 3.20.
10 Phil. 2.21.

for a thousand years and his brief interval of freedom to follow, St. John sums up the activity of and in the Church during the 'thousand years': 'And I saw thrones, and men sat upon them and judgment was given to them.' Now, there is no question of the last judgment in this verse. The thrones and the enthroned men are the prelates who govern the Church here and now. And the judgment is best interpreted as the one contained in the words: 'Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.'[11] This is the same judgment St. Paul refers to in the words: 'For what have I to do with judging those outside? Is it not those inside whom you judge?'[12]

The Apocalypse continues: 'And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the witness to Jesus and because of the word of God.' We are to understand as implied by the words which come further on that these souls of the martyrs 'reigned with Christ a thousand years'—of course, not yet reunited with their bodies. For, the souls of the faithful departed are not divorced from Christ's kingdom which is the temporal Church. If they were, we should not be mindful of them at God's altar in the communion of the Body of Christ; nor would there be any point in hastening one's baptism, in time of danger, lest one die unhaptized; nor in seeking reconciliation, when one has been cut off from Christ's Body by a sinful conscience or by the Church's penitential discipline. Why do we go to all this trouble if the faithful departed are not still Christ's members? We may be sure, then, that their souls reign with Him, just as their bodies will in time to come, even while the thousand years are rolling by. This truth explains another text in the Apocalypse: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth. Yes, says

11 Matt. 18.18.
12 1 Cor. 5.12.

the Spirit, let them rest from their labors, for their works follow them.'[13] We conclude, therefore, that even now, in time, the Church reigns with Christ both in her living and departed members. 'For to this end Christ died,' says St. Paul, 'and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.'[14] If St. John mentions only the souls of the martyrs, that is because they who have battled for the truth unto death reign in death with a special splendor. But, as the part is here used for the whole, we know that the words apply to the remaining faithful who belong to the same Church which is Christ's Kingdom.

The verse that comes next should be applied to both the living and dead: 'And who did not worship the beast or his image, and did not accept his mark upon their foreheads or upon their hands.' As to the identity of the beast in question, there is need of very careful study. Nevertheless, consistently with sound faith, one may take it to be the godless city as opposed to the City of God, men and women without faith as opposed to those who believe. The beast's 'image,' I think, is his deception as found, for example, in such men as profess the faith yet live like pagans. For they pretend to be what, in fact, they are not, and are called Christians, not because of full faith, but of false face.[15] The beast possesses, in addition to the openly avowed enemies of Christ's Name and of His glorious City, the 'weeds' which are marked for uprooting from His kingdom, the Church, at the end of the world.

Those who do not worship the beast or his image are surely those who follow Paul's admonition: 'Do not bear the yoke with unbelievers.'[16] Their not worshiping means their not agreeing with, their not becoming subject to, unbelievers. Their not accepting his 'mark' upon their 'foreheads'

13 Apoc. 14.13.
14 Rom. 14.9.
15 . . . *non veraci effigie, sed fallaci imagine Christiani.*
16 2 Cor. 6.14.

and 'hands' means that they refuse the stigma of false faith and bad morals. Such men, alive or dead, keep themselves aloof from such evils, and so reign with Christ, even now, in a fashion befitting the passage of time, throughout this whole era indicated by the 'thousand years.'

St. John continues: 'The rest of the dead did not come to life.' Compare his other words: 'The hour is coming, and now is here, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live'[17]—implying that the rest of the dead (who do not hear) will 'not come to life.' The added clause, 'till the thousand years were finished,' means that during that time 'the rest of the dead' did 'not come to life' as they should by passing over from death to life. Therefore, in the day of the body's resurrection, they will go forth from their tombs, not to life but to 'judgment,' meaning that condemnation which is called the second death. Anyone at all who will have failed to 'come to life' during this millennium, this whole era of the first resurrection, by not hearing 'the voice of the Son of God' and by not passing from death to life will certainly, when the second and bodily resurrection comes, pass to the second death, body and soul together.

'This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection!' Now, anyone who thus participates is one who not only rises from the death of sin, but perseveres in his new-found life. 'Over these,' says John, 'the second death has no power.' Therefore, it has power over all the others of whom he said above: 'The rest of the dead did not come to life till the thousand years were finished.' They may have lived long enough in their bodies, in the period John calls the 'thousand years,' but they did not rise from the binding death of their ungodliness. If they had, they would have shared in the first resurrection and thus escaped the power of the second death.

17 John 5.25.

Chapter 10

There are people who claim that the idea of resurrection applies only to bodies and that the first resurrection, as well as the second, is to be a corporeal one. The only things that can rise are those that can fall, they say. Now, bodies fall down in death. Indeed, dead bodies are called corpses (*cadavera*) precisely because of this falling (*cadendo*). Therefore, they conclude, there can be a question of resurrection only for the body, none for the soul.

Well, they have St. Paul against them, for he speaks of the soul's resurrection. Certainly, those whom he addressed in the following words had risen spiritually, not physically: 'If you have risen with Christ, seek the things that are above.'[1] And, in another place, we find the same theme differently expressed: 'Just as Christ has risen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life.'[2] And again: 'Awake, sleeper, and arise from among the dead, and Christ will enlighten thee.'[3]

With respect to their argument that only falling things can rise (bodies, therefore; not souls), why do they not take note of these texts: 'Go not aside from him, lest ye fall';[4] and, 'To his own lord he stands or falls';[5] and, 'Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.'[6] For, the kind of falling these passages tell us to avoid is the falling of the soul, not of the body. Consequently, on their argument that only what falls can rise, if souls, too, can fall, they must grant that souls, too, can rise.

When John had written: 'Over these the second death has no power,' he added: 'but they will be priests of God and

1 Col. 3.1.
2 Rom. 6.4.
3 Eph. 5.14.
4 Eccli. 2.7.
5 Rom. 14.4.
6 1 Cor.10.12.

Christ, and will reign with him a thousand years.' Here he is speaking not just of bishops and of presbyters (who are now priests in the Church), but of all Christians. For, just as we call all of them Christs by reason of their mystical chrism, we call them all priests insomuch as they are members of the One Priest. St. Peter speaks of them as a 'chosen race, a royal priesthood.'[7]

Surely, too, this text implies, however briefly and incidentally, that Christ is God. The words 'Priests of God and Christ' mean priests of the Father and Son, even though it was in His servant form that Christ was both made Son of Man and also ordained a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech. But I have spoken of this more than once in this work.

Chapter 11

St. John continues: 'And when the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison, and will go forth and deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and will gather them together for the battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.'[1]

At that time the Devil will have a single objective in his deception, namely, to bring on this battle, rather than deceive by the multifarious means of his previous malice. The expression 'will go forth' means that his secret hatred will blaze out into open persecution. For this is to be the very last of all persecutions immediately preceding the very last of all judgments—a persecution which Holy Church, the world-wide City of Christ, is to suffer at the hands of the world-wide city of the

7 1 Pet. 2.9.

1 Apoc. 20.7.

Devil, in every place where the two cities will then extend.

The peoples John calls Gog and Magog are not to be thought of as some definite barbarians dwelling in a certain part of the earth, such as the Getae and Massagetae (as some have imagined on account of the initial letters), or any other foreign tribes beyond the pale of the Roman Empire. John clearly indicates that they are to be everywhere in the world, 'nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog.'

Of these names I am told that, literally, Gog means 'a roof' and Magog 'from the roof.' Thus we may take the words to mean an 'abode,' and a 'person issuing from this abode' and, therefore, 'the peoples in whom the devil abides as in an abyss,' and 'the devil himself, lifting himself up and coming out of them.' They are the 'roof' and he is 'from the roof.' If, on the other hand, we apply both names to the peoples (rather than the first to them, the second to the Devil), then they are the 'roof' because the ancient foe is now shut up and roofed over in them, and they will issue 'from the roof' when their concealed hatred bursts forth and is revealed in the open.

The words, 'And they went up over the breath of the earth and encompassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city,' obviously do not mean that they gathered or will gather in some one place where, we must suppose, the camp of the saints and the beloved city is to be, for, of course this City is Christ's Church which is spread over the whole world. Wherever His Church will be (and it will be among all nations, 'over the breadth of the earth'), there is to be the camp of the saints and the beloved City of God. There will she be, surrounded by all her enemies, intermingled with her as they are and will be in every people, girt with the appalling magnitude of that besetting, hemmed in, straitened, and

encompassed by the pressures of that mighty affliction; but never will she give up her fighting spirit, her 'camp,' as St. John says.

Chapter 12

St. John's words, 'And fire from heaven came down out of heaven and devoured them,' must not be taken to indicate that supreme punishment of the ungodly which is to begin only with the words: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire.'[1] For it is then that the wicked are to be cast into fire rather than to have fire fall upon them. John's words, 'fire from heaven,' can well be interpreted as symbolizing the staunchness of the saints, their refusal to give in and do the bidding of their raging enemies. For, the heavens are called a 'firmament,' and by its firmness the ungodly will be tormented by blazing zeal, because powerless to win over Christ's holy ones to the camp of Antichrist. This is the devouring fire and it is said to come from God because it is by God's grace that the saints are to be unconquerable, to the great torment of their foes. Note that there are two kinds of zeal, one full of love, the other full of hatred. The former is indicated in the words, 'The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up';[2] the latter, in the words, 'Zeal hath taken hold of the senseless people, and now fire shall devour thine opponents.'[3] The 'now,' of course, implies: 'not to mention the fire of the last judgment.'

Suppose, however, that by this heaven-sent, devouring fire John means the afflictions to be visited on the living persecutors of the Church, when Christ comes to slay the Antichrist 'with the breath of his mouth.'[4] Even so, these afflictions will

1 Matt. 25.41.
2 Ps. 68.10.
3 Cf. Isa. 26.11 (Septuagint).
4 2 Thess. 2.8.

not be the first punishment of the ungodly, for that is the one which is to follow upon the resurrection of the body.

Chapter 13

The last of all persecutions, Antichrist's, is to go on for three and a half years, as I have already mentioned,[1] and as can be seen both in the Apocalypse[2] and in the Prophet Daniel.[3] Now the question, quite reasonably, presents itself: Should these three and a half years, brief as they are, be included in the thousand years of the Devil's binding and the saints' reign with Christ; or are they outside the thousand and superadded to them? If we suppose the first, then the saints' reign with Christ will be somewhat longer than the time of the Devil's binding. For, surely, when the Devil is loosed for all-out persecution, the saints will be reigning with their King, triumphing even in those dark days. Yet, in this supposition, how does the Apocalypse assign the same length of a 'thousand years' both to the reign of the saints and to the Devil's chaining if, as a matter of fact, the latter comes to an end three and a half years before the former?

If, on the other hand, we suppose that the brief span of the Antichrist's persecution lies outside the thousand years and follows upon their termination, then we can take literally the consecution of the texts: 'They will be priests of God and Christ, and will reign with him a thousand years' and 'When the thousand years are finished, Satan will be released from his prison.'[4] For, taken in this sequence, the texts mean that the saints' reign and the Devil's binding will end simultaneously after a thousand years, and the period of the persecution

1 Cf. above, 20.4.
2 Apoc. 12.6,14.
3 Dan. 7.25; 12.7,11.
4 Apoc. 20.6,7.

will stretch beyond these limits. In that case, we are compelled to say that during the persecution in question Christ's saints will not be reigning with Him. But, surely, it is highly presumptious to say that at the very time when Christ's members are clinging to Him most immovably, when the glory of resistance is increasing in proportion to the bitterness of the conflict and the crown of martyrdom is all the more complete, Christ's members will not be reigning with Him? It is no escape to say that they cannot be said to 'reign' because of their sufferings. For, then, we will have to grant that the saints who suffered within the thousand years were not reigning—at least, not for the period of their tribulations. We will have to admit, further, that those, whose spirits John claims to have seen in vision, martyrs for Jesus and the word of God, were not reigning with Christ during their trials. We will have to admit, finally, that the very ones who were most perfectly the possession of Christ were not His kingdom! Such a ridiculous conclusion must be avoided at all costs. On the contrary, the glorious martyrs' souls, triumphing over every species of trial and tribulation, having gone out of their mortal members, have reigned, do now reign with Christ, will continue to reign until the thousand years are over and, finally, will reign even in their immortal bodies.

Therefore, during the three and one half years, not only the souls of earlier martyrs but also the souls of martyrs put to death during that final persecution itself will reign with Christ and will continue to reign until the world is no more and then pass to the kingdom where death is no more. We conclude, then, that the reign of Christ with His saints will be longer than the Devil's bonds and imprisonment, for, even when he is released, they will continue to reign with their King, the Son of God, for these three and a half years.

There remains only the problem of the text I quoted above. We can take one of two interpretations. Either it means that

the Devil's imprisonment will end in a thousand years, whereas the reign of the saints will not, the 'thousand years' standing for the 'whole duration' of each, the Devil's being somewhat briefer than the saints'; or, given the brevity of three and a half years, the text does not oblige us to count them as either substracted from Satan's bondage or added to the triumph of the saints. This was the case with the four hundred years I discussed in Book XVI of this work. Actually, they were somewhat more than four hundred, but were called four hundred in round numbers. And this kind of computation is common in the sacred writings, as any careful reader can observe.

Chapter 14

Having spoken thus of the ultimate persecution, St. John goes on to state succinctly the full punishment that is to be meted out in the last judgment to the hostile city and her prince, the Devil. Here are the words: 'And the devil who deceived them was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'[1] I have already remarked[2] that the 'beast' in this passage can well be the ungodly city. As to the 'false prophet,' he stands either for Antichrist, or the beast's 'image,' namely, that false-faced faith of which I also spoke.

Next, John picks up again the theme of the last judgment (which is to accompany the second and bodily resurrection of the dead), and describes the manner of its revelation to him: 'And I saw a great white throne and the one who sat upon it; from whose face the earth and heaven fled away,

1 Apoc. 20.9,10.
2 Cf. above, 20.9.

and there was found no place for them.'[3] Note that he does not say, '. . . One who sat upon it, *and* from his face earth and heaven fled away,' because this 'flight' had not yet taken place, that is, not before the judgment of the living and the dead. What he says is that he beheld One sitting on the throne 'from *whose* face earth and heaven fled away'—not then, but subsequently. The fact is that it will be after the judgment is completed that heaven and earth will end with the beginning of the new heaven and earth. For it will be by a transformation, rather than by a wholesale destruction that this world of ours will pass away. This explains St. Paul's words: 'This world as we see it is passing away. I would have you free from care.'[4] It is, to be sure, the visible appearance of the world that is destined to pass away, not its nature.

Having said that he saw sitting on the throne One from whose face earth and heaven would later on fly away, John continues: 'And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. And another scroll was opened which is the book of each man's life; and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the scrolls, according to their works.[5] He says he saw scrolls opened, and another scroll, but he makes clear the character of the latter, 'which is the book of each man's life.' The first scrolls he mentions, then, must represent the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. These will be opened to show the commandments of God, and the other scroll to show how these commandments were kept or disobeyed by each and every man.

As for this latter scroll, if one considers it materially, it surpasses all powers of thought for size and length. And if it contains the entire life-record of all men, how much time

3 Apoc. 20.11.
4 1 Cor. 7.31,32.
5 Apoc. 20.12.

would it take to read it? Are we to suppose that there will be an equal number of angels and men present in the judgment, and that each man will hear his life-record read out by an angel accredited to him for this task? In this supposition, there would not be one book for all, but a book for each.

Yet, the Apocalypse wants us to think of one book: 'And another scroll was opened,' it says. No, the book in question must symbolize some divine action in virtue of which each man will recall his deeds, good or bad, and review them mentally so that, without a moment's delay, each one's conscience will be either burdened or unburdened and thus, collectively and individually, all will be judged at the same moment. And because, in virtue of this divine illumination each man will, so to speak, read the record of his deeds, God's action is called a 'book.'

Next, John tells what dead people, great and small, are destined for judgment. To do so, he goes back to narrate a detail he had passed by or, better, had momentarity set aside: 'And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell gave up the dead that were in them.' I say he goes back to narrate a detail he had deferred, because, unquestionably, the action of this verse preceded the judgment, even though he speaks of judgment as though it were anterior. From here on, however, he keeps to the sequence of events, and to show the proper sequence he repeats in its proper place what he had already said concerning the judgment of the dead. For, having written: 'And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell gave up the dead that were in them,' he reiterates: 'And they were judged each one according to their works'—identical with his earlier verse, 'And the dead were judged according to their works.'

Chapter 15

Who, now, are these dead men who were in the sea and whom the sea will give up? Surely, we are not to think that, because a man drowns, his soul does not go to hell, or that his body is preserved in the sea, or—what is still more absurd —that the sea keeps good dead men and hell the bad ones. No one could entertain such a notion. Surely, those are right who take the sea in this text to stand for this world of ours. To indicate, accordingly, that the living whom Christ is to find on earth are to be judged along with the arisen dead, John termed the former dead, too. Such are the good 'dead' to whom the words were addressed: 'For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.'[1] The bad 'dead,' on the other hand, are addressed in the verse: 'Leave the dead to bury their own dead.'[2] There is another reason why living people can be called dead, namely, because they carry around bodies destined for death. This was St. Paul's thought when he wrote: 'The body, it is true, is dead by reason of sin, but the spirit is life by reason of justification'[3]—a text in which he shows that both life and death exist in a man living in his body, death in his body, life in his spirit. And even though, a moment later, St. Paul uses the more common expression, 'mortal body,' in this verse what he says is 'dead body.'

These, then, are the 'dead' men whom the containing sea will surrender—the still living men all without exception, who will be peopling this world of ours at the time of judgment.

'And death and hell gave back the dead that were in them,' says John. The sea is said to 'deliver up' its dead, because they are presented for judgment living, just as they are; whereas death and hell are said to 'give back their dead,' because they are actually restored to life. And do not imagine

1 Col. 3.3.
2 Matt. 8.22.
3 Rom. 8.10.

that it would perhaps have been sufficient for John to say, death *or* hell. He said both—death alone for the good men who, although they suffered death, did not go to hell; and hell for the evil men who, after death, suffer the pains of hell.

If it seems reasonable, now, to believe that the ancient saints, who believed in Christ who was to come, stayed in the regions of hell—far off, of course, from the tormented areas of the ungodly—until such time as Christ's blood and His descent thither rescued them, we consequently must believe that the virtuous faithful who followed the payment of that redemptive price have absolutely no relationship to hell—indeed, that their bodies, as well as their souls, after the resurrection shall reap their deserved reward.

'And they were judged each one, according to their works.' Having said this, John adds a terse description of the sentence accorded them: 'And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire.' In this verse, 'hell and death' stand for the Devil (together with the entirety of his fellows) inasmuch as he is the author of death and of the torments of hell. For, speaking more plainly in an earlier part of this same text, John had said, as if anticipating the final verdict: 'And the devil who deceived them was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone.' On the other hand, the less obvious clause at that point, namely, 'where are also the beast and the false prophet,' becomes more readily intelligible in the light of what is said here: 'And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the pool of fire.'

The 'book of life' is not for jogging God's memory lest He forget. It is a figure of the predestination of those who are to receive eternal life. We are not to imagine that God does not know them, and has to read in His book to find out who they are. On the contrary, the book of life is precisely His infallible prescience of those inscribed therein, whose very registration there means only that they are foreknown by Him.

Chapter 16

Having concluded his prophecy of the judgment awaiting bad men, St. John has to speak of what is to befall the good. For, once he has elaborated upon our Lord's brief words, 'And these will go into everlasting punishment,'[1] he goes on to develop the implications of our Lord's conclusion, 'but the just into everlasting life.' 'And I saw,' he says, 'a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.'[2] This will happen in the order which he indicated, by anticipation, in the earlier verse where he said he saw sitting on a throne one from whose face heaven and earth fled away. First, to be sure, will come the judgment of those uninscribed in the book of life and their consignment to eternal fire (the nature and location of this fire, by the way, no human being knows, in my opinion, save perhaps someone to whom the Holy Spirit may reveal it). Afterwards, this world as we see it will pass away, burned away by terrestrial fires, just as the flood was caused by the overflowing of terrestrial waters. This conflagration will utterly burn away the corruptible characteristics proper to corruptible bodies, as such; whereupon our substance will possess only those qualities which are consistent with bodies immortalized in this marvelous transformation—to this end, that the world, remade into something better, will become fit for men now remade, even in their bodies, into something better.

As for the words, 'And the sea is no more,' it is hard to know whether it will be dried up by the terrible heat of those flames, or will itself be transformed into something better. For, though we read that there will be a new heaven and earth, I cannot recall having ever seen mentioned a new sea, save perhaps in that verse of the Apocalypse, 'A sea of glass like to

1 Matt. 25.46.
2 Apoc. 3.21.

crystal.'[3] Yet, in that passage, St. John was not talking about the end of the world; morever, he did not claim to have seen a sea proper, but something like a sea. Still, as prophecy is prone to intermingle the literal and metaphorical and so veil its meaning, it may be that in our present text, 'and the sea is no more,' John was speaking of the identical sea he spoke of earlier: 'And the sea gave up the dead that were in it.' For, then, this world of ours, made restless and stormy by the lives of men (and, hence, figuratively called the sea), will have passed away.

Chapter 17

'And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold the dwelling of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away. And he who was sitting on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.'[1]

This City is said to come down out of heaven in the sense that God created her by means of heavenly grace, as He told her through Isaias: 'I am the Lord creating thee.'[2] Indeed, her descent from heaven began with the beginning of time, since it is by God's grace coming down from above through the 'laver of regeneration' in the Holy Spirit sent from heaven that her

3 Apoc. 4.6; 15.2.

1 Apoc. 21.2-5.
2 Cf. Isa. 45.8.

citizenship has continuously grown up on earth. Yet, only after God's last judgment, the one He has deputed to Jesus Christ His Son, will His tremendous gift of grace be revealed so brightly in her that in this new brightness there will remain no traces of her earthly blemishes. For, then, her members' bodies will pass over from mortal corruptibility to the new immortality of incorruption.

To imagine that this prophecy is now being fulfilled in the thousand years of her reign with Christ her King seems to me sheer effrontery in the face of the explicit delaration: 'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more.' For, can anyone be so silly and so madly attached to his own opinion as to say that, in the trials of this mortal life, the whole of God's people or even a single individual among them, past, present, or to be, has been, is, or even will be free from tears and pain? Is it not rather the case that the holier and more ardent the desires of a man become, the more copious are his tears in supplication? Do we not hear the authentic voice of the heavenly City, Jerusalem, in the words: 'My tears have been my bread day and night,'[3] and: 'Every night I will wash my bed: I will water my couch with tears,'[4] and: 'My groaning is not hidden from thee,'[5] and: 'My sorrow was renewed'?[6] Are not her sons those 'who sigh under their burden, because they do not wish to be unclothed, but rather clothed over, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life'?[7] Are not these the men who, having 'the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within themselves, waiting for their adoption as sons, the redemption of their

3 Ps. 41.4.
4 Ps. 6.7.
5 Ps. 37.10.
6 Ps. 38.3.
7 Cf. 2 Cor. 5.4.

body'?[8] Shall we say that St. Paul was not a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, or, better, was not all the more profoundly such by this very fact when he confessed that the plight of his brethren, the carnal Israelites, was for him a great sadness and continuous sorrow at the heart?

When, moreover, shall death be exiled from that City save when she shall be able to say: 'O death, where is thy contention? O death, where is thy sting? Now the sting of death is sin.'[9] To be sure, there will be no sin once that question can be asked; but, for the present, no unworthy citizen of the City, the very same John who wrote the Apocalypse, is the one we hear crying out in his Epistle: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'[10]

Admittedly, the Apocalypse contains many obscure texts that exercise the reader's intelligence, and only a few so clear that one may rely on these in laboriously studying out the remainder. This is due chiefly to the fact that there is multiform repetition of the same themes—so various that, whereas John seems to be saying constantly new things, you find out that he is repeating the same themes now this way, now that. However, the passage, 'And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain any more,' so luminously concerns the world to come, immortality and eternity of the saints (for only then and only among them will the above-mentioned sorrows be no more), that no one who finds this text obscure should look for clarity anywhere in Holy Scripture or hope to find it.

8 Cf. Rom. 8.23.
9 Cf. 1 Cor. 15.55,56.
10 1 John 1.8.

Chapter 18

At this point let us examine the writings of St. Peter that have to do with the last judgment. He says: 'In the last days there will come deceitful scoffers, men walking according to their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For of this they are wilfully ignorant, that there were heavens long ago, and an earth formed out of water and by water through the word of God. By these means the world that then was, deluged with water, perished. But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by that same word have been stored up, being reserved for fire against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not be ignorant of this one thing, that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord does not delay in his promises, but for your sake is long-suffering, not wishing that any should perish but that all should turn to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; at that time the heavens will pass away with great violence, and the elements will be dissolved with heat, and the earth, and the works that are in it, will be burned up. Seeing therefore that all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of men ought you to be in holy and pious behavior, you who await and hasten towards the coming of the day of God, by which the heavens, being on fire, will be dissolved and the elements will melt away by reason of the heat of the fire! But we look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promises, wherein dwells justice.'[1]

There is nothing here about the resurrection of the dead, but enough, surely, about the destruction of this world of ours. The extent, moreover, of its destruction Peter seems to

1 2 Pet. 3.3-13.

have intimated for our faith by alluding to the ancient flood. For he says that the world, as it then existed, perished—not the round globe of the earth alone, but the heavens as well. These heavens, of course, we take to be those spaces of our atmosphere which were overtopped by the rising waters. In the flood, the whole, or nearly the whole, of the windswept air (which Peter calls heaven, or rather heavens—the lower heavens, to be sure, not the uppermost reaches where the sun, moon, and stars are situated) was converted into moisture and thus perished along with the earth whose former appearance the flood had, of course, also destroyed.

'But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by that same word have been stored up, being reserved for fire against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.' This means that the heavens and earth, that is, the world which was preserved from the flood to replace the world which perished, is itself reserved for the ultimate conflagration in the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 'Destruction,' then, means no more than some great transformation to come, since St. Peter does not hesitate to predict it even of men whose nature will certainly endure even in everlasting punishments.

At this point a man may ask: 'If, judgment being over, this present world is to burn before the new heaven and earth replace it, where will the saints be at the time of this great fire since, with their reunited bodies, they will have to be in some physical location?' A possible answer is that they will be in those higher reaches of the heavens which will be as untouched by the flames as they were by the flooding waters; for, of course, they will have such bodies that they can be wherever they want to be. In any case, being immortal and incorruptible, they will have no more fear of fire than the three men whose mortal and corruptible bodies remained uninjured in the fiery furnace.

Chapter 19

I realize that, in view of the length to which this work has already gone, I must pass over a great many texts of the Gospels and Epistles which deal with the last judgment. But there is one passage in St. Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians which I must quote. It runs: 'We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together unto him, not to be hastily shaken from your right mind, nor terrified, whether by spirit, or by utterance, or by letter attributed to us, as though the day of the Lord were near at hand. Let no one deceive you in any way, for the day of the Lord will not come unless the apostate comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and is exalted above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits in the temple of God and gives himself out as if he were God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I used to tell you these things? And now you know what restrains him, that he may be revealed in his proper time. For the mystery of iniquity is already at work; provided only that he who is at present restraining it, does still restrain, until he is gotten out of the way. And then the wicked one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth and will destroy with the brightness of his coming. And his coming is according to the workings of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all wicked deception to those who are perishing. For they have not received the love of truth that they might be saved. Therefore God sends them a misleading influence that they may believe falsehood, that all may be judged who have not believed the truth, but have preferred wickedness.'[1]

There can be no doubt that what is here said refers to

1 2 Thess. 2.1-11.

Antichrist and the day of judgment (or, as St. Paul calls it, the day of the Lord) which is not to come unless the 'apostate' (as Antichrist is here called) comes first. And, of course, this word, apostate, or rebel against the Lord God, which applies to all who are wicked, is especially applicable to Antichrist. It is not certain in which 'temple of God' he is to sit, whether in the ruins of the Temple built by King Solomon or in the Church. Of course, St. Paul could never have meant the temple of some idol or demon when he spoke of the 'temple of God.' Hence, many have preferred to think that he had in mind not so much Antichrist himself, but rather his whole 'body,' as it were, in the sense of the Prince along with the multitude of men who belong to him. In this view, the correct reading should be 'sits as the temple of God' (as it is in the Greek text) rather than 'in the temple.' The meaning would then be: 'He sits there as though he were the temple of God, which is the Church.' (At any rate, there are other Latin phrases in which *in* means 'as': for example, *sedet in amicum,* 'sits as a friend.')

Note that St. Paul says: 'You know what restrains him, that he may be revealed in his proper time.' Since the Thessalonians know the reason for Antichrist's delay in coming, St. Paul had no need to mention it. But, of course, we do not know what they knew; and, much as we would like, and hard as we strive, to catch his meaning, we are unable to do so. The trouble is that the subsequent words only make the meaning more obscure: 'For the mystery of iniquity is already at work; provided only that he who is at present restraining it, does still restrain until he is gotten out of the way. And then the wicked one will be revealed.' What is to be made of those words? For myself, I confess, I have no idea what is meant. The best I can do is to mention the interpretations that have come to my attention.

There are those who find here a hidden allusion to the Ro-

man Empire which St. Paul did not care to make explicit, for to have done so would have been misunderstood as a gratuitous slur on those who thought of the Empire as everlasting. In this view, the expression, 'the mystery of iniquity is already at work,' is a reference to Nero, whose deeds already seemed worthy of Antichrist—so much so that, in one hypothesis, Nero is to return to life to become Antichrist. In another view, he was never killed, but was merely abducted to create the impression that he was killed, and is living in hiding and will remain in the vigor of the age he had at the time of his putative death until, at the proper time, he will reveal himself and be restored as the ruler of the Empire. So far-fetched an hypothesis seems to me singularly presumptuous; on the other hand, I can well believe that there may be an allusion to the Roman Empire in the words: '. . . provided only that he who is at present restraining it, does still restrain, until he is gotten out of the way,' if we take the meaning to be: '. . . provided only that he who is at present ruling continue to rule until he is gotten out of the way or destroyed.' As to the words, 'and then the wicked one will be revealed,' no one doubts that the 'wicked one' is Antichrist.

According to a second interpretation, both expressions, 'what restrains him' and 'the mystery of iniquity at work,' refer to the increase in the number of those sinners and false Christians within the Church who will become numerous enough to make a great multitude for Antichrist. It is the hidden character of this iniquity that makes it a 'mystery.' And by the words *qui tenet teneat,* the Apostle, therefore, exhorts the faithful to hold on firmly to the faith they hold until the Church is rid of the 'mystery of iniquity' which is now hidden. In this view, St. John has the same 'mystery' in mind when he writes in his Epistle: 'Dear children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have arisen; whence we know it is

the last hour. They have gone forth from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would surely have continued with us.'[2] Some take those words to imply that just as many heretics or 'antichrists' have already left the bosom of the Church before the end (at a time which St. John calls the 'last hour'), so when all those who belong, not to Christ, but to the last Antichrist, leave the Church, this Antichrist will be revealed.

Thus it is that what is obscure in the words of the Apostle has given rise to various conjectures. Yet, of one thing there is no doubt, namely, that he meant: Christ will not come to judge the living and the dead until after His adversary, Antichrist, has come to seduce the souls of the dead. And, of course, the fact that those souls are to be seduced is already a part of God's hidden judgment. For, as St. Paul says: 'His coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all wicked deception to those who are perishing.'[3] Then it is that Satan will be unbound and, by means of Antichrist, will reveal the full power of his marvelous but seductive action.

There seems to be some ambiguity in the expression, 'signs and lying wonders.' It may be that Satan is to deceive men's senses by means of phantasms whereby they imagine they see wonders which are non-existent; or, perhaps, true miracles will lead into deception those who ought to believe that miracles can be done only by God, but who mistakenly ascribe them to the Devil's power, particularly at a time when Satan is to be given unheard-of power. Certainly there were no phantasms when fire fell from heaven and at one sweep destroyed the whole family and all the flocks of holy Job, and when the storm broke and destroyed his home and killed his children.[4]

2 1 John 2.18,19.
3 2 Thess. 2.9.
4 Job. 1.11,19.

Yet, all this was the work of Satan, to whom God had given the power. When the time comes, it will be clear in which sense the 'signs and lying wonders' are to be taken. What is certain is that those who have deserved to be seduced will be deceived by the 'signs and lying wonders,' whatever their nature may be, because 'they have not received the love of truth that they might be saved.'[5] Nor did St. Paul hesitate to add: 'Therefore God sends them a misleading influence that they may believe falsehood.' 'God sends' does not imply a mission but a permission.[6] What the Devil does is done with his own wicked and malign purpose, but it is permitted by God's just judgment so 'that all may be judged who have not believed the truth, but have preferred wickedness.'

Thus it comes about that judgments both precede and follow the deception. Those who are deceived are antecedently judged by these judgments of God, covertly just and justly covert, by which He has never ceased to judge even since the first sin of His rational creature; and those who are deceived are subsequently judged in a last and overt judgment by Christ Jesus, who is to be the most just of all judges as He was the victim of the most unjust of all judgments.[7]

Chapter 20

Although St. Paul says nothing about the resurrection of the dead in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, his first Epistle contains these words: 'We would not, brethren, have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep, lest you should grieve, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so with him God will bring

5 2 Thess. 2.10.
6 *Deus mittet quia . . . permittet.*
7 . . . *iustissime iudicaturum, iniustissime iudicatum.*

those also who have fallen asleep through Jesus. For this we say to you in the word of the Lord, that we who live, who survive until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself with cry of command, with voice of archangel, and with trumpet of God will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise up first. Then we who live, who survive, shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord.'[1] These words of the Apostle prove as clearly as possible that the dead are to rise again when Christ comes to judge the living and the dead.

It is usual in this connection to raise the question whether those who will be living when Christ comes are to escape death altogether or are to experience a flash of death while passing into immortality in that moment during which they are to be 'caught up,' together with those who have risen, 'in clouds to meet the Lord in the air.' (Notice that St. Paul uses himself and his disciples to personify, so to speak, those who will be living when Christ comes.) There is no ground, of course, for saying that it is impossible for those living to die and come to life again during the time they are being transported upwards 'in the air.' Certainly, we must not suppose that the words, 'and so we shall ever be with the Lord,' imply that we are to remain forever with the Lord 'in the air.' That is not where He remains. He passes through the air. One 'meets' a person who is moving, not one who is stationary. 'So we shall be with the Lord' merely means that we shall have eternal bodies wherever we are destined to be with Him.

In favor of the view that even those will suffer momentary death before their immortality whom the Lord will find alive, we have the argument implied in the Apostle's words: 'In Christ all will be made to live,' and those later words which deal with the resurrection: 'What thou thyself sowest is not

1 1 Thess. 4.13-17.

brought to life unless it dies.'[2] In the light of these last words, surely, we must conclude that those who are alive at Christ's coming can only be brought by Him to immortal life on condition that they die. Against this conclusion, it might be argued that the only human bodies that can be said to be 'sown' are those which die and, in some sense, return to dust, in accordance with the divine judgment pronounced on the father of the human race when he sinned: 'Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.'[3] But, if this is the true meaning of 'sown,' then we must admit that neither the words of the Apostle nor those in Genesis apply to those who will be living in their bodies when Christ comes. Those who are 'caught up in clouds' are certainly not 'sown,' since they neither turn nor return to dust, whether they escape death altogether or endure a momentary death while 'in the air.'

Another argument in favor of this momentary death is found in an expression which St. Paul used in writing to the Corinthians concerning the resurrection of our bodies: 'We shall all rise' or, as some manuscripts have it, 'We shall all sleep.'[4] Seeing that there can be no resurrection without a preceding death, and granted that 'sleep' must here mean death, how can it be true that 'all' will either 'rise' or 'sleep,' if the many who are alive at the coming of Christ are neither to 'sleep' nor to 'rise'?

The conclusion, then, would seem to be that if we believe that the living saints who will be 'caught up' to meet Christ at His coming are to be separated momentarily from their bodies only to return at once to the same bodies, now become immortal, then we shall have no difficulty in interpreting the texts: 'What thou thyself sowest is not brought to life, unless it die' and 'We shall all rise' (or, 'We shall all sleep').

2 1 Cor. 15.22,36.
3 Gen. 3.19.
4 1 Cor. 15.51.

For, the saints in question will not be 'brought to life' unless they die, however brief this death is to be, nor will they, therefore, be exempt from a 'resurrection' preceded by a 'sleeping,' however short.

Nor is it difficult to believe that so many bodies will, in some sense, be 'sown' in the air and immediately afterwards return to an immortal and indissoluble life, once we believe what the Apostle so clearly states, namely, that the resurrection is to be accomplished 'in the twinkling of an eye,'[5] and also that the dust of the most ancient corpses will return with such ease and rapidity to members which are to live everlastingly. Nor need we think that those living saints must be exempt from the universal law, 'Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return,' merely because their bodies do not fall into dust as they die but die and rise from death while they are being borne upwards in the air. 'Unto dust thou shalt return' means no more than: 'When life is lost thou shalt return unto what thou wert before life was given thee,' or 'When the soul is gone thou shalt be what thou wert before the soul arrived.' This ordinarily means dust, since it was upon a face of dust that God breathed the breath of life when the first man was made into a living soul. Thus, 'Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return' means: 'Thou art animated dust, which thou once wert not, and thou shalt be inanimate dust as thou once wert.' And, of course, even before they decay all human corpses are but dust; and 'dust' is what the bodies of those saints will become, once they die and no matter where they die, since they will be without that life which they are so soon to reassume. Then they will go to dust, because from being living men they will become what they were before they were living; much as something 'goes to ashes' when it becomes ashes, or, as we might say, a man 'goes to pieces' when he becomes old,[6] and so on.

5 1 Cor. 15.52.

6 . . . *it in vetustatem, quod fit vetus.*

But this is merely the kind of poor speculation of which our weak reasoning is at present capable. To be able to know how things will really be we must wait till that day comes. We must believe, if we want to be Christians, that there will be a bodily resurrection of the dead when Christ comes to judge the living and the dead; but, of course, we have no way to comprehend perfectly just how this is to take place. The best we can say is that this faith of ours is not, on that account, in vain.

But now, as I promised, I must turn to those prophecies of God's last judgment which are contained in the Old Testament. However, for any reader who has tried to master what has already been said there will be no need, I think, to delay over any detailed exposition or discussion.

Chapter 21

Take the text: 'Thy dead shall rise and those in the graves shall rise again; and all who dwell on earth will rejoice, for thy dew is their health. But the land of the wicked will fall into ruin.'[1] The first part concerns the resurrection of the just, but the last few words may be taken to mean: 'The bodies of the wicked will fall into the ruin of damnation.' In regard to the resurrection of the just, the attentive reader will notice some distinctions. 'The dead shall rise' refers to the first resurrection; 'those in the graves' refers to the second; and in the following words we may not improperly find a reference to the saints whom the Lord will find alive on earth. As for the words, 'thy dew is their health,' we are not wrong in taking 'health' to mean 'immortality,' that most perfect health which needs no daily medicine of ordinary food.

A second prophecy of Isaias, dealing with the day of judg-

1 Cf. Isa. 25.19. St. Augustine uses a translation of the Septuagint.

ment, first offers hope to the good and then threatens the wicked: 'For thus saith the Lord: Behold I will bring down upon her as it were a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent the glory of the Gentiles. Their sons shall be carried on their shoulders and caressed on their knees. As one whom a mother caresseth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem. You shall see and your heart shall rejoice and your bones shall flourish like an herb, and the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants, and he shall threaten his enemies. For behold the Lord shall come like fire and his chariot like a whirlwind, to render his wrath in indignation and his rebuke with flames of fire. For the Lord shall judge all earth by fire and all flesh by his sword; and many will be wounded by the Lord.'[2]

The 'river of peace' is, surely, a promise to the just of that incomparable fullness of peace with which we are to be flooded in eternity and of which I have spoken in the preceding Book.[3] This peace which is promised to the blessed is called a river to help us to realize that, in the land of felicity which is in heaven, everything will be, as it were, soaking in perfect beatitude. But the Lord is said to 'bring down' this river because it brings down upon earthly bodies the waters of incorruption and immortality, and because, by overflowing from the higher to the lower, it makes men equal to the angels, 'comforted in Jerusalem.' This we should take to be the heavenly Jerusalem which, as St. Paul says, is above and is free and is our mother, not 'the present Jersualem' which 'is in slavery with her children.'[4] There, after the toils and tears and cares of mortal life, we shall be comforted like children caressed in the arms and lap of a mother. For, to us uncouth newcomers the unfamiliar felicity of heaven will seem like a

2 Cf. Isa. 66.12-16 (Septuagint).
3 Cf. above, 19.9-11.
4 Gal. 4.25,26.

mother's tenderness and care. There we shall see and our heart will rejoice. Isaias does not say what we shall see. But, of course, he means God. Thus will the promise of the Gospel be fulfilled in us: 'Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God'[5]—and all those other things, too, which now we do not see but know by faith, pitiably picturing them as best we can with our poor human imagination but falling far short of the reality. Faith here shall be perfected in vision there.

After saying 'your heart shall rejoice,' Isaias added 'and your bones shall flourish like an herb.' Hence we are not to think that the joys of the heavenly Jerusalem are limited to the spirit. The 'bones' recall, as by an afterthought, the resurrection of our bodies. Actually, of course, this resurrection precedes, it does not follow, the vision; and, in fact, in the preceding chapter Isaias had alluded at length to the new heaven and the new earth in the course of an account of what the saints can look for at the end of the world. His words are: 'There will be a new heaven and a new earth and they shall not be mindful of what went before nor shall it arise in their hearts, but they shall rejoice and be glad in this. Behold I shall create Jerusalem a rejoicing and my people a joy, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her.'[6]

(In passing, I may recall that some try to find here an allusion to the carnal joys of the thousand years. Actually, it is usual for the Prophets thus to mingle metaphorical and literal expressions. Yet, anyone with a serious purpose and a little useful and salutary effort can discern the Prophet's spiritual sense; it is only a lazy and worldly person or one who is ignorant or uneducated who will rest content with the literal and superficial sense and refuse to penetrate the deeper meaning. This parenthesis must serve as my only comment on the passage in question.)

5 Matt. 5.8.
6 Isa. 65.17-19 (Septuagint).

To return to the words, 'and your bones shall flourish like an herb.' This, as I was saying, is a reference to the resurrection of the flesh. But that Isaias had in mind the resurrection of the just is shown by what follows: 'And the hand of the Lord shall be known to his servants.' This is the 'hand' of Him who distinguishes His friends from His enemies or, as one reading of the text says, from those who refuse to believe in Him. The words, 'He shall threaten,' mean that the dire things mentioned threateningly in the prophecy will become effective reality at the end of the world, namely, the 'fire' and the 'whirlwind' and the 'sword.' Any of these words can be taken as a symbol of judicial punishment, for, when the Prophet says that the Lord comes 'like fire,' he has in mind those for whom the coming is to involve punishment. The 'chariots' mentioned can be interpreted, satisfactorily enough, as angelic ministrations. The words 'all earth' and 'all flesh' do not include men who are spiritual and holy, but apply only to those who are earthly and carnal, men who 'mind the things of earth,'[7] whose 'inclination . . . is death,'[8] men who are called 'flesh' by the Lord in the text: 'My spirit shall not remain in man forever, since he is flesh.'[9] The words, 'Many will be wounded by the Lord,' apply to the 'wound' that will bring about the 'second death.'

It is true that words like 'fire,' 'sword,' and 'wound' can be used in a good sense. Thus, the Lord said that He came 'to cast fire upon the earth';[10] 'and there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire,'[11] at the coming of the Holy Spirit. So, too, our Lord said that He did not come 'to send peace upon the earth but . . . the sword';[12] and Scripture calls the word of God a 'two-edged sword'[13] because of the two Testa-

7 Phil. 3.19.
8 Rom. 8.6.
9 Gen. 6.3.
10 Luke 12.49.
11 Acts 2.3.
12 Matt. 10.34.
13 Heb. 4.12.

ments; and, in the Canticle of Canticles, Holy Church says that she is 'wounded by love'[14] as though stricken by an arrow of love. However, in this passage of Isaias dealing with our Lord coming as an avenger, it is clear how these words are to be understood. The expression, 'they that did eat swine's flesh,' and the words that follow refer (under the figure of foods forbidden in the Old Law) to the wicked sinners upon whom retribution is to fall in the last judgment. Then follows a summary of the grace of the New Testament, from the first coming of the Saviour to that last judgment which we are now discussing. And with that, the prophecy ends.

The Prophet quotes the Lord's words: 'I come, that I may gather them together with all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory.'[15] For, as St. Paul says: 'all have sinned and have need of the glory of God.'[16] The Lord is to 'set a sign among them,' 'for the Gentiles to see and they will believe,' and He is to 'send of them that shall be saved' to various peoples and 'to the islands afar off,' to those who had not heard of Him nor seen His glory, and they are to declare His glory to the Gentiles and to bring the brethren of those to whom the Prophet was speaking, namely, the brethren of the Israelites who were chosen in faith under God the Father. 'They shall bring . . . out of all nations for a gift to the Lord, upon horses and in chariots . . . to my holy mountain, Jerusalem.' The 'horses and chariots' can be taken to mean divine aid through the ministry of men or of angels; 'Jerusalem' means the holy City composed of the faithful who are now spread out over the world. For, where men are helped by God they believe, and where they believe they come to 'Jerusalem.' This 'coming' of the Gentiles to the Church is described, figuratively, in the words: 'as if the children of Israel should offer to him in his house sacrifices

14 Cf. Cant. 2.5.
15 Isa. 66.17,18.
16 Rom. 3.23.

and psalms.' Of the promise, 'I will take of them to be priests and levites,' we see the fulfillment in our own day; and not less so because the priests and levites are now chosen by reason of the personal calling given by divine grace (as is proper in the new dispensation, in which Christ is the High Priest according to the order of Melchisedech) and are not chosen on the flesh-and-blood basis of family relationship (as was the case with the original priesthood according to the order of Aaron). Moreover, the dignity of the new priesthood no longer depends on the title, too often shared by the worthy and the unworthy alike, but on personal holiness which is peculiar to good men alone.

After this promise of divine mercy, which is to us so obviously fulfilled in the Church, comes the prophecy of the destiny and doom that await mankind after the last judgment has separated the good from the bad: 'For as the new heaven and the new earth will remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed stand and your name. And there shall be month after month and sabbath after sabbath. All flesh shall come to adore before my face in Jerusalem, saith the Lord. And they shall go out, and see the members of men that have transgressed against me. Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be a sight to all flesh.'[17]

Whether it is God who is here speaking through the Prophet or the Prophet who is speaking of the Lord, the Prophet thus ends his book with the end of the world. I have followed the reading 'members,' though others read 'carcases,' which implies a manifest punishment of the body. The difficulty, however, is that a carcase means a dead body, whereas the bodies in question must be alive, since they are to suffer torments. Of course, 'carcases' [*cadavera*] would be ap-

17 Isa. 66.22-24.

propriate if the word implied that these were the bodies of those who are to 'fall' [*cadere*] into the second death, much as 'the land of the wicked will fall,' as the Prophet had said earlier. In any case, 'bodies of men' certainly includes those of sinful women, also, who are to suffer the same judgment. The word 'man' includes 'woman,' if for no other reason than that woman was made from man. 'All flesh shall come to adore.' The 'all' means 'all kinds' rather than 'all individuals,' since a great many will be already enduring their punishment. The 'flesh' is that of good men. It is very pertinent to my main theme to notice that both the good and bad are referred to by such words as 'flesh' and 'members' (or 'carcases'), for these words confirm our faith in the fact that it will only be after the resurrection of the body that the final judgment will assign to the good and the bad their destiny or doom.

Chapter 22

But how, it will be asked, can the good 'go out'[1] to see the pains of the wicked? Surely, they cannot leave their abodes of bliss and travel, in a physical sense, to the place of pain, in order to see by bodily presence the torments of the wicked. Of course not. It is only their knowledge that will 'go out'; and the 'out' is used simply to indicate that those who are punished will be outside of heaven. In the same way, our Lord spoke of 'outer darkness' in contrast to the 'inner' abode implied in the words addressed to the good servant: 'Enter into the joy of thy master.'[2] The main point here is that no one should think of the wicked as entering into heaven in order to be known, whereas the good can go out to the

1 Isa. 66.24.
2 Matt. 25.21.

wicked by means of the knowledge they are to have of the damned, because, of course, the blessed will know what is outside of heaven. Thus, those in pain will know nothing of what is going on inside, in the joy of the Lord, whereas those in joy will know what is occurring outside in the outer darkness. The meaning, then, of the words, 'they will go out,' is that they will not be in ignorance of those who are outside of heaven. Surely, if the Prophets could know such things before the event by reason of God's practical presence in their minds, and while they were still in this mortal life, how could it be possible for the blessed to be ignorant, when they are immortal and when the facts are occurring and when God is 'all in all.'[3]

'So shall your seed stand and your name.'[4] The seed of the saints in beatitude is the seed of which St. John spoke when he wrote: 'And his seed abides in him';[5] and the 'name is that of which the same Isaias writes: 'I will give them an everlasting name.'[6] The words, 'There shall be for them month after month and sabbath after sabbath,' mean moon after moon and rest upon rest. The allusion here is to the transformation of the saints when they pass from the old shadows of time into the new lights of eternity. On the contrary, there are promised, as pains for the wicked, 'unquenchable fire' and 'the worm that shall not die.' These expressions have been very variously explained. Some take both the 'fire' and the 'worm' as punishments for the body, and others refer both to the soul. Still others take 'fire' in the literal sense as punishment for the body, and the 'worm' as a metaphor for spiritual anguish. This last explanation seems to me highly acceptable, but for the moment I shall not pursue this discussion, since the theme of the present Book is not particular punishments

3 1 Cor. 15.28.
4 Isa. 66.22.
5 1 John 3.9.
6 Isa. 56.5.

and rewards (which must be more carefully examined later), but the general separation of the good from the wicked which is to be determined by the last judgment.

Chapter 23

Daniel, too, in his prophecy of the last judgment,[1] says that it will be preceded by the coming of Antichrist. He also ends his prophecy with an account of the eternal reign of the saints. In his vision, he saw, first, four beasts as symbols of four kingdoms, the fourth of which is overcome by a king (who can be identified as Antichrist). And, last of all, he saw the eternal kingdom of the Son of Man (Christ). Thereupon Daniel breaks out: 'My spirit trembled, I Daniel was afrighted at these things and the visions of my head troubled me. I went near to one of them that stood by, and asked the truth of him concerning all these things, and he told me the interpretation of the words.' Then follows the exposition as Daniel heard it from the one he questioned: 'These four great beasts are four kingdoms which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most high God shall take the kingdom, and they shall possess the kingdom for ever and ever.' Thereupon Daniel says: 'After this, I would diligently learn concerning the fourth beast, which was very different from all, and exceedingly terrible; his teeth and claws were of iron; he devoured and broke in pieces, and the rest he stamped upon with his feet; and concerning the ten horns that he had on his head; and concerning the other that came up, before which three horns fell; and of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth speaking great things, and was greater than the rest. I beheld, and lo, that horn made war against the saints, and prevailed over them. Till the Ancient of days came and

1 Dan. 7.2-28.

gave judgment to the saints of the most High, and the time came, and the saints obtained the kingdom.'

Thus did Daniel ask. Next he tells us what he learned from the one he questioned: 'The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be greater than all the kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns of the same kingdom shall be ten kings; and another shall rise up after them, and he shall be mightier than the former, and he shall bring down three kings. And he shall speak words against the High One, and shall crush the saints of the most High; and he shall think himself able to change times and laws, and they shall be delivered into his hand until a time, and times, and half a time. And the judgment shall sit, that his power may be taken away and be broken in pieces, and perish even to the end. And that the kingdom, and power, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, may be given to the people of the saints of the most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all kings shall serve him, and shall obey him.' Whereupon Daniel says: 'Hitherto, is the end of the word. I Daniel was much troubled with my thoughts and my countenance was changed in me; but I kept the word in my heart.'

There are some expositors who take the four kingdoms to be the Assyrian, Persian, Macedonian and Roman Empires. This is an excellent suggestion, as anyone can see who will study the scholarly and carefully written work of the priest, Jerome, on Daniel. And, of course, not even a person who was half asleep could read the text of Daniel and have any doubt that the Church will have to endure, for however short a time, a savage assault from the power of Antichrist, just before the last judgment of God assigns to the saints a kingdom of which there is to be no end. That 'a time, and times, and half a time' means a 'year, and two years, and half a year'

and, hence, three years and a half is clear, first, from the number of days which Daniel mentions later[2] and, second, from the number of months[3] which Scripture sometimes mentions. The word 'times' may seem an indefinite plural in our language, but the Greek texts (and, so I am told, the Hebrew texts as well) show that 'times' is written in the dual number and so means 'two times.' As for the 'ten kings' who are mentioned, I confess that to interpret this literally, in the sense that Antichrist will find ten actual rulers reigning, is to run the risk of having Antichrist come upon us unexpectedly. At any rate, there are not that many rulers in the whole Roman Empire. A better suggestion, so it seems to me, is that the number ten indicates the total number of rulers up to the time when Antichrist is to come. Ten, like a thousand, a hundred, seven, and other such numbers, stands for 'totality' in general.

In another chapter, Daniel writes: 'And a time of tribulation shall come such as never was from the time that nations began on earth even to that time. And at that time shall thy people be saved, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of those that sleep in the mound of earth shall arise; some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach and eternal confusion. And they that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and many of the just like stars for ever and ever.'[4]

This passage is surprisingly like one in the Gospel, as far, at least, as concerns the resurrection of the body: 'All who are in the tombs shall hear the voice of the Son of God. And they who have done good shall come forth unto resurrection of life; but they who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment.' Compare 'all who are in the tombs' with 'those that

2 Dan. 12.11: 'A thousand two hundred ninety days.'
3 Reading *mensium* rather than *mensum* as Hoffmann's text has it.
4 Dan. 12.1-3.

sleep in the mound' (or, as some texts read, 'dust,') 'of the earth'; and 'shall come forth' with 'shall arise'; and 'they who have done good,' etc., with 'some unto life everlasting' and the rest. Nor is there any real contradiction between St. John's 'all who are in the tombs' and Daniel's 'many' in place of 'all.' As an illustration of this, notice how, in one place, God said to Abraham: 'I have placed thee as the father of *many* nations'[6] and in another: 'In your descendants *all* the nations of the earth shall be blessed.'[7]

To Daniel himself was given a promise of the resurrection of his body. A few verses later, we read: 'And come thou and rest; for there is one more day to the fulfillment of the consummation, and thou shalt rest and rise in thy lot at the end of days.'[8]

Chapter 24

There are frequent enough references to the last judgment in the Psalms, but they are little more than brief and passing allusions. However, there is one text so clearly prophetic of the end of the world that attention must be drawn to it: 'In the beginning, O Lord, thou foundest the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish but thou remainest; and all of them shall grow old like a garment. And as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art always the Selfsame, and thy years shall not fail.'[1]

In the light of these words, it is hard to see how Porphyry could both praise the Hebrews for worshiping a God so true

5 John 5.28,29.
6 Cf. Gen. 17.5.
7 Gen. 22.18.
8 Cf. Dan. 12.13.

1 Ps. 101.26-28.

and great as to be able to make the pagan demons tremble and, at the same time, blame the Christians for the folly of believing—counter to the pagan oracles—that the world will have an end. The passage I have just quoted is taken from an authoritative document of the Jewish religion. The words are addressed to the God who, as Porphyry admits, makes the pagan demons tremble. Yet, notice what the Hebrew Psalmist says: 'The heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish.' Now, surely, if the heavens, the very summit and securest part of the universe, are to perish, no one has any right to suppose that the world itself will remain. Remember, this is the wisdom that is found in the holiest writings of the Hebrews. Why, then, does Porphyry not call it folly? Such wisdom is certainly not to the liking of Jupiter, and it runs counter to the high authority of that oracle of Jupiter, on account of which the Christians are charged with credulity.[2] Nevertheless, Porphyry is so pleased with the wisdom of the Hebrews that he hails it as having the approval of his pagan gods; and, at the same time, he hates Christian wisdom as folly and vanity, more particularly because of its faith in the end of the world. Now, where is Porphyry's logic? The Hebrew Psalmist says: 'The heavens shall perish.' Christianity says: 'The world is to come to an end.' Can the heavens 'perish' unless the world comes 'to an end'? Then, why are the Hebrews wise and the Christians fools?

Actually, in the specifically Christian Scriptures, the Gospels and Epistles, the words which express the 'end' of the world, namely, 'passing away,' are far less emphatic than the word 'perish' in the psalm which is accepted by both Jews and Christians alike. St. Paul merely says: 'This world as we see it is passing away';[3] and St. John: 'the world is passing away';[4] and St. Matthew: 'Heaven and earth will

2 Cf. above, 19.23.
3 1 Cor. 7.31.
4 1 John 2.17.

pass away.'[5] Moreover, St. Peter, in one of his Epistles, makes it clear that it is not the whole universe but merely the earth that is to 'perish,' and that even this part of the universe is not really to 'perish,' in the full sense of the word. His words are: 'By these means, the world that then was, deluged with water, perished. But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by that same world have been stored up, being reserved for fire against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.'[6] And you can see, a few verses later, that the only heavens that are to 'perish' are those which have been 'stored up, being reserved for fire,' and that the only elements which are to be burned are the stormy and disturbed elements in the lowest reaches of the universe, while the higher heavens, the firmament of fixed stars, will remain intact.

St. Peter writes: 'The day of the Lord will come as a thief; at that time the heavens will pass away with great violence, and the elements will be dissolved with heat, and the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Seeing, therefore, that all these things are to be dissolved, what manner of men ought you to be like?'[7] No difficulty arises even from the expression found in St. Matthew's Gospel: 'the stars will fall from heaven.'[8] Very probably, these words are used metaphorically and are not meant to convey what they say literally. And, in any case, if the stars are really to fall from heaven, then the heavens themselves must be supposed to remain where they are. Most likely, these 'stars' mean the meteors in the lowest heaven falling in a marvelous shower, like the meteor mentioned by Virgil as running across the sky like a torch with a great train of light and then falling into the Idaean woods.[9]

5 Matt. 24.35.
6 2 Pet. 3.6,7.
7 2 Pet. 3.10,11.
8 Matt. 24.29.
9 *Aeneid* 2.694.

In contrast to these New Testament texts, the expression in the psalm seems to imply that nothing of the heavens will escape destruction, since they are all the works of God and all of them must perish. But the real trouble with the pagans, who are committed by the approval of their oracle to defend the religion of the Hebrews, is that they so hate St. Peter as to be unable to bring themselves to make use of his words to mitigate the Psalmist's expression: 'They shall perish.' The pagans could have been saved from the conclusion that the whole universe is to perish by taking the 'heavens' to mean only the lower heavens, just as the Apostle in his Epistle takes the whole 'world' which perished in the flood to mean only a part, namely, the earth and the lower sky above it. But, as I have said, the pagans will not bring themselves to do this, for fear of approving the wisdom of the Apostle Peter, and the idea that the final conflagration will be no more destructive than we hold the flood to have been. The pagans insist that neither flood nor flames can destroy the whole of mankind. In that case, their only solution is to say that their gods, who praised the Hebrew wisdom, did so because they had failed to read David's psalm.

There is also a passage in Psalm 49 that can be interpreted as an allusion to the last judgment: 'God shall come manifestly, our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. A fire shall burn before him; and a mighty tempest shall be round about him. He shall call heaven above, and the earth, to judge the people. Gather ye together his saints to him; who set his covenant before sacrifices.'[10] This we take to be a reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is to come from heaven, as we believe, to judge the living and the dead. He will come manifestly as He once came hiddenly. He will come to judge justly between the just and the unjust, as He once came to be condemned unjustly by the unjust. 'He shall not keep silence,'

10 Ps. 49.3-5.

in the sense that He will reveal Himself and speak out as a judge, as He once came hiddenly and kept silence before the judge, when He was led as a sheep to the slaughter and was dumb as a lamb before his shearer, as was prophesied by Isaias and as was fulfilled as we see in the Gospel.[11] As for the meaning of the 'fire' and the 'tempest,' this I have already stated in an earlier discussion of a similar prophecy of Isaias.[12] The words 'He shall call heaven above,' must mean what St. Paul said: 'We shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air,'[13] since the saints and the just can properly be described by the word 'heaven.' Certainly, the words as they stand make no sense, since no calling could make 'heaven' be elsewhere than 'above.'

If we read the whole phrase as 'He shall call heaven and earth to judge his people,' we can get a sense in harmony with revelation by taking 'heaven' to mean those who are to judge along with Christ and 'earth' to mean those who are to be called to judgment. In this case, 'he will call heaven above' will not mean 'He will catch them up into the air,' but 'He will lift them up to seats of judgment.' Another interpretation of 'He will call heaven to judge' might be 'He will summon the angels who are above in lofty places to descend with Him to pass judgment'; and, in this case, 'He will call earth' would mean 'He will call the men on earth' to be judged. If the sense of the text is 'He will call heaven above and earth above,' then the best meaning, I should think, would be found by taking 'heaven' to mean men, in respect of their souls, and 'earth' to mean men, in respect of their bodies; thus, the reference would be to all those who are to be caught up to meet Christ in the air.

'To judge his people' means to distinguish the good from the

11 Isa. 53.7; Matt. 26.63.
12 Cf. above, 20.21.
13 1 Thess. 4.17.

bad, to separate the sheep from the goats. The command, 'Gather ye together his saints to him,' is addressed to the angels because, in fact, it is by their ministry that the great judgment is to be carried out. And if we ask: 'Which of the angels are bidden to gather together to Him,' the answer is: 'Those who set his covenant before sacrifices.' In fact, this is the substance of a holy life, to prefer a covenant with Him to all sacrifices. For, God himself has told us that the works of mercy are to be preferred to sacrifices: 'I desired mercy, and not sacrifice.'[14] Or, if we translate *super sacrificia* as 'in sacrifices' (as we can translate *super terram* as 'in earth'), then, of course, the works of mercy are themselves sacrifices pleasing to God, as I remember pointing out in Book X of this work.[15] In these works of mercy, the just 'set a covenant,' because it is on account of the promises which are contained in God's New Covenant (or Testament) that the saints perform these works. Hence it is that, when the saints have been gathered on the right hand of Christ at the last judgment, He will say to them: 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat' and the rest of those words which indicate the good works of holy men and the eternal rewards which the last judgment is to bring them.[16]

Chapter 25

The Prophet Malachias or Malachiel ('angel of God') is sometimes identified with the priest Esdras, some of whose writings have been received into the canon of Scripture.

14 Osee 6.6.
15 Cf. above, 10.6.
16 Matt. 25.34-40.

Jerome tells us that this view is current among the Jews.[1] Concerning the last judgment, Malachias writes: 'Behold he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts. And who shall be able to think of the day of his coming? And who shall stand to see him? For he enters like a refining fire and like the fuller's herb. And he shall sit refining and cleansing the silver and he shall purify the sons of Levi and shall refine them as gold and as silver, and they shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice. And the sacrifices of Juda and of Jerusalem shall please the Lord, as in the days of old and in the ancient years. And I will come to you in judgment and will be a speedy witness against sorcerers, and adulterers, and false swearers, and them that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widows and the fatherless, and oppress the stranger, and have not feared me, saith the Lord of hosts.'[2]

The words in the opening part of this prophecy, 'like refining fire . . . refining and cleansing . . . purify the sons of Levi . . . refine them as gold,' seem to make it clear that in the last judgment there are to be purgatorial pains meted out to some of the faithful. What else can these words mean? Isaias, too, says something similar: 'The Lord shall wash away the filth of the daughters of Sion, and shall wash away the blood of Jerusalem out of the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning.'[3] Of course, it might be objected that they are to have their filth washed away and to be purified only in the sense that they are to have the wicked separated from them by the judgment. Thus it would be the segregation and damnation of the wicked that would be the purgation of the good, who would henceforth be free from any contamination arising from mingling with the wicked. But the answer to this is to be found in the words that

1 In his *Proemium in Malachiam.*
2 Mal. 3.1-6.
3 Isa. 4.4.

follow and which declare that those who are to be cleansed are to 'offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice.' This implies that those purged are to be pleasing to the Lord by their sacrifices of holiness and are, therefore, to be cleansed from the unholiness whereby they were displeasing to God. In a word, once they are cleansed, they are themselves to be sacrifices of complete and perfect holiness, since this sacrifice of themselves to God is the most acceptable of all sacrifices. However, I must defer a more careful discussion of these purgatorial pains to another time.

As for the 'sons of Levi' and 'Juda' and 'Jerusalem,' these we should take to mean the Church of God, as being composed not only of Jews but also of those Gentiles who have been 'gathered in.' And by 'Church' I do not mean the Church as it now is on earth, in which 'if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'[4] I mean the Church as it is to be in the world to come, purged by the last judgment as a threshing floor is cleansed by a winnowing wind, after the fire has cleansed all those who will need purification, and when not one will be left who needs to offer sacrifice for his sins. Obviously, anyone who must continue to offer sacrifices for sins is still guilty of the sins for whose forgiveness the sacrifice is offered. He is still hoping for the pardon that will come when the sacrifice has been offered and has been accepted by God.

Chapter 26

When Malachias wrote that the 'sons of Levi . . . shall offer sacrifices to the Lord in justice,' it was God's purpose to reveal that His City would one day give up the old practice of offering material sacrifices. The future sacrifices would

4 1 John 1.8.

not be offered in sin nor, therefore, for sin. Hence, we must find the correct interpretation of the words which follow, namely: 'And the sacrifices of Juda and of Jerusalem shall please the Lord, as in the days of old, and in the ancient years.'[1] Certainly, the Jews have no basis in these words for hoping for a return of the 'days of old' with their sacrifices in accordance with the Law of the Old Testament. The fact is that these sacrifices were offered, not 'in justice,' but in sin. Their principal and prime purpose was to get pardon for sins, and it was by God's command that even the offering priest, who must be presumed to have been holier than the rest of the people, was accustomed to offer, first, for his own sins and, then, for those of the people.

How, then, must we interpret the words, 'as in the days of old and in the ancient years'? Very likely, the Prophet is alluding to the period when our first parents, in the earthly Paradise, pure and unblemished by any taint of sin, offered themselves to God as the cleanest of oblations. For, certainly, once they sinned and suffered exile from Eden, and once all human nature (excepting our One Mediator and the little ones who have just been baptized) was under condemnation because of Adam's sin, 'there can be none who is clean from stain, not even the baby who has lived but a day on earth.'[2] It might, perhaps, be argued that anyone who offers sacrifices in faith can rightly be said to offer them 'in justice,' on the ground that 'the just man lives by faith.'[3] But, of course, no man who really lives by faith would say anything of the sort, for the simple reason that he would know he was deceiving himself, if he said he had no sin. In any case, no one at all would dream of putting this time of faith on a level with that period of glory when those who 'offer sacrifices in justice' will

1 Lev. 16.6; Heb. 7.27.
2 Cf. above, 18.35, for full text.
3 Mal. 3.17-4.3.

be purified by the fire of the last judgment. We must believe that, after that purification, the just will be stained by no sin at all. The conclusion, then, is that, apart from the period when our first parents lived before sin in the perfect innocence and felicity of Paradise, there is no period which can stand comparison, as far as freedom from sin goes, with the condition of holiness which is to be after the final purification. Hence, the 'days of old' and the 'ancient years' must mean the days of paradisal innocence.

Another argument in favor of this conclusion can be found in the passage of Isaias which follows the mention of the 'new heaven and the new earth.' There is much there concerning the blessedness of the saints expressed in allegories—figures which I had no time above to explain in detail. But one expression may be recalled here: 'As the days of the tree of life, so shall be the days of my people.'[4] Now, anyone who has ever opened the Scriptures knows where God planted the 'tree of life.' It was from the fruit of this tree that God excluded Adam and Eve, when their sin cast them out of Paradise; and it was to guard this tree that the Cherubim with the flaming sword were set.[5]

Of couse, it might be argued that those 'days of the tree of life' mentioned by Isaias are the days which are now being spent by Christ's Church, since 'the tree of life' is simply a prophetic figure for Christ, for that Wisdom of God which Solomon had in mind when he said that Wisdom is 'a tree of life to them that lay hold on her.'[6] After all, how can the time in Paradise be called 'ancient years,' since it was less than one full year before our first parents were cast out—in fact, it was before they begot a single child. This is an objection which I shall leave unanswered, because it would take me too

4 Isa. 65.22.
5 Gen. 3.24.
6 Prov. 3.18.

long to discuss all that I should need to discuss in order for the truth to appear. In any case, I have in mind another interpretation of the text, which rules out the possibility that the Prophet was promising, as a great favor, the return of the 'days of old' and the 'ancient years' of material sacrifices. The fact is that the Old Law commanded that the victims of the sacrifices should be animals that were clean and without any blemish and thus able to symbolize people of sinless holiness—a condition realized in fact only by Christ. What this offering of immaculate victims in the 'days of old' and in the 'ancient years' prefigured was the future reality of those utterly immaculate and sinless victims, the saints without sin, who are to offer themselves 'in justice' after the judgment, and after the purifying fire, for those who were fit for this fire. It is this immaculateness in the bodies of the victims in the 'ancient years' that prefigures the sinlessness of the immortal flesh and spirit of the saints in the world to come.

Malachias ends his prophecy with a list of the sins of those who are to be reckoned fit, not for the fire of purification, but for that of damnation: 'And I will come to you in judgment, and will be a speedy witness against sorcerers and adulterers and false swearers,' and so forth. Finally, we have the words: 'For I am the Lord and I change not,'[7] as though to imply: 'Although your sin and my grace make a change in you—your sin, for the worse; my grace, for the better—I do not change.' God says that He is to be a 'witness,' to imply that, in His judgment, He will have no need of witnesses. That He will be a 'speedy' witness may mean that He will come suddenly and that His judgment, which seems slow in coming, will in fact come very rapidly because unexpectedly; or it may mean that He will convince the consciences of men in the fewest possible words. 'For inquisition shall be made

7 Mal. 3.5,6.

into the thoughts of the ungodly'[8] and, as the Apostle says: 'Their conscience bears witness to them even when conflicting thoughts accuse or defend them, on the day when, according to my Gospel, God will judge the hidden secrets of men through Jesus Christ.'[9] In this sense, then, will the Lord be a 'speedy witness' that He will speedily recall to memory enough to convince the conscience of sinners and to punish them.

Chapter 27

Another text in Malachias (which I have already cited in a different connection in Book XVIII[1]) is relevant to the last judgment. It begins: 'And they shall be my special possession, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I do judgment,' and ends with the words: 'And you shall tread down the wicked when they shall be ashes under the sole of your feet in the day that I do this, saith the Lord of hosts.'[2] The difference between the rewards and punishments which are due to the just and the wicked is a difference which is not perceived in the light of our visible sun amid the shadows of this life, but it will become luminously clear in the light of the Sun of Righteousness and in the brightness of eternal life—for that will be a judgment the like of which has never been.

Chapter 28

After the prophecy, Malachias says: 'Remember the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for

8 Wisd. 1.9.
9 Rom. 2.15,16.

1 Cf. above, 18.35, for full text.
2 Mal. 3.17-4.3.

all Israel,'[1] and he makes a passing reference to 'precepts and judgments.' This emphasizes the declaration he had just made about the immense difference there is to be between the observers and the breakers of the Law. The Prophet's further purpose was that his readers might learn to give a spiritual interpretation to the Law, finding in it Christ the Judge who is to make the distinction between the good and the wicked. For, it was not without reason that Christ said to the Jews: 'If you believed Moses, you would believe me also, for he wrote of me.'[2] It was, in fact, of their purely material interpretation of the Law and of their failure to perceive that its temporal promises were but symbols of eternal rewards that they broke into such rebellious resentfulness as to say: 'He laboreth in vain that serveth God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked sorrowful before the Lord of hosts. Wherefore now we call the proud people happy, for they that work wickedness are built up.'[3] It was such complaints as these that compelled the Prophet to anticipate, as it were, the last judgment in which the wicked will be so far from even a pretense of happiness that their misery will be apparent to all, whereas the good, untroubled by even transitory sorrow, will enjoy a manifest and unending beatitude. Malachias had already given a similar illustration of the kind of murmurings that wearied the Lord: 'Every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord and such please him.'[4] The only point I want to make is that such murmurings against God were the result of an unspiritual interpretation of the Law.

Another illustration can be found in Psalm 72. David says that his 'feet were almost moved' and that his 'steps had well

1 Mal. 4.4.
2 John 5.46.
3 Mal. 3.14,15.
4 Mal. 2.17.

nigh slipped,' meaning that he almost fell, because he had 'zeal on occasion of the wicked seeing the prosperity of sinners.' Among other murmurings, he notes: 'How doth God know ? and is there knowledge in the most High? . . . And I said: Then have I in vain justified my heart, and washed my hands among the innocent.' He felt the great difficulty of the problem of the seeming misery of the good and the apparent felicity of the wicked, and tried to solve it: 'I studied that I might know this thing, it is a labor in my sight, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand concerning their last ends.'[5] The point here is that in the last judgment all will be changed, for the difference between the misery of the wicked and the felicity of the just will be enormously clearer than it could ever be on earth.

Chapter 29

Malachias, then, admonished the Jews to 'remember the law of Moses,' because he foresaw that they would obstinately continue, for a long time to come, to accept the Law in an unspiritual sense. His prophecy goes on: 'Behold I will send you Elias the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the father to his son and the heart of a man to his neighbor, lest I come and strike the earth to its utter destruction.'[1] It is now in the heart and on the tongue of every Christian that, toward the end of time and before the last judgment, the Jewish people are to be converted to faith in the true Messias, that is to say our Christ, by means of this great and remarkable Prophet, Elias; and he will reveal to them the

5 Ps. 72.2,3,11,13,16,17.

1 Mal. 4.5,6.

true meaning of the Law. Nor is it a vain hope to look for this coming before the coming of our Judge and Saviour, seeing that our ground for believing that Elias is still alive is the clear declaration of Holy Scripture that Elias, in a fiery chariot, 'went up by a whirlwind into heaven.'[2] When, therefore, Elias comes and teaches the Jews to replace their material interpretation of the Law by one that is spiritual, he will 'turn the heart of the father to his son' (or, perhaps, 'the hearts of the fathers to their children,' since the Septuagint often puts the singular in place of the plural). These words mean that the Jews, the 'children,' will come to understand the Law as their 'fathers,' the Prophets (including Moses himself), understood it. The 'heart' (or understanding) of the fathers will be 'turned' (or communicated) to the mind of the children. 'And the heart of the children to their fathers.' This is a good alternative reading for the Septuagint, 'the heart of a man to his neighbor,' since fathers and sons are the closest of all neighbors. The words mean that the Jews will come to think as the prophets thought.

If one keeps to the actual text of the Septuagint (remembering that the seventy translators were divinely inspired[3]), we may find a different and, perhaps, preferable meaning, namely, that Elias will turn the heart of God the Father to His Son, in the sense that Elias will teach that the Father loves the Son (not, of course, in the sense that Elias will bring it about that the Father should love the Son). The result will be that the Jews will love the Son, that is, our Christ, whom they once hated. As things now are, the Jews think that God has His heart turned away from our Christ. From their point of view, the Father will turn His heart to the Son when they themselves have a change of heart and come to learn of the love which the Father has for the Son. The following words

2 4 Kings 2.11.
3 . . . *prophetice interpretati sunt.*

in the Septuagint text, 'the heart of a man to his neighbor,' mean that Elias will turn the heart of a man to the man Christ; for Christ deigned to become our 'neighbor' when He became man, taking the 'form of a servant,' although as our God He was in the 'form of God.' So much, then, for what Elias is to do. Malachias adds: 'Lest I come and strike the earth to its utter destruction.' The 'earth' means those whose thoughts are earthly, as is still the case with the Jews, whose lack of spiritual insight has led to such murmurings against God as: 'It is the wicked who are pleasing to God,'[4] and, 'He laboreth in vain who serveth God.'[5]

Chapter 30

There are many other passages, of the divinely inspired Scripture which deal with the last judgment, but it would take too long to assemble them all. Suffice it to say that evidence enough has been adduced to prove that the judgment has been foretold in both Testaments. The fact that it is Christ who is to come from heaven as the Judge is made less explicit in the Old Testament than in the New. The difficulty is that in the Old Testament, when the 'Lord God' says He is to come or when it is stated that the 'Lord God' will come, it is not obvious that Christ is meant.

Now, of course, it is true that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is each Lord and God; yet that is no reason why one should not attempt to show that, in the relevant texts, it is Christ that is meant. The first proof is this. In the prophetical books, Jesus Christ speaks under the name of the 'Lord God' in many passages where there can be no doubt at all that it is Christ who is meant. Hence, when there is a reference to

4 Cf. Mal. 2.17.
5 Mal. 3.14.

the last judgment, indicating that the 'Lord God' is to come, it is at least possible to argue that Christ is meant, even though this is not made explicit. Take, for example, the passage in Isaias where God says, through the Prophet: 'Hearken to me, O Jacob, and thou Israel when I call. I am he, I am the first, and I am the last. My hand also hath founded the earth and my right hand hath measured the heavens: I shall call them and they shall stand together, and all will assemble and all will hear. Who hath declared these things? Loving thee I will do thy will in regard to Babylon, and so take away the seed of the Chaldeans. I, even I have spoken and called him. I have brought him and I have made his way prosperous. Come ye near unto me and hear this. I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. When these things were done I was there and now the Lord God hath sent me and his spirit.'[1] Now, it is Jesus Christ who is speaking here as the 'Lord God'; yet this would not have been obvious if He had not added the final words: 'And now the Lord God hath sent me and his spirit.' These words were spoken by Christ in His 'form' as a 'servant.' He used a verb in the past tense to indicate a future event, much as was done in that other text of the same Prophet: 'He was led as a sheep to the slaughter.'[2] Instead of saying: 'He shall be led,' he uses a verb in the past tense to indicate a future event, as is frequently the case in the prophecies.

Another example to prove the same point may be found in a passage of Zacharias where the 'Almighty' sends the 'Almighty.' This can only mean that God the Father sends God the Son. The text runs: 'Thus saith the Lord Almighty. After the glory he hath sent me to the nations that have robbed you; for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye. For behold I lift up my head upon them, and they

1 Isa. 48.12-16.
2 Cf. Isa. 53.7; the Vulgate reads: 'He snall be led . . .

shall be a prey to those who served them; and you shall know that the Lord Almighty sent me.'[3] In this case, the Lord Almighty says that He is sent by the Lord Almighty. How can anyone doubt that it is Christ who is speaking and, in fact, speaking to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Remember what is said in the Gospel: 'I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'[4] The comparison of these lost sheep to the pupil of God's eye is explained by the perfection of God's love. And, of course, it was to this flock of sheep that the Apostles belonged. 'After the glory' of His Resurrection—a glory alluded to in the words: 'Jesus had not yet been glorified'[5]—it was in the person of these Apostles that Jesus was sent to the Gentiles; and this was to be the fulfillment of what the Psalmist had prophesied: 'Thou wilt deliver me from the contradictions of the people; thou wilt make me head of the Gentiles.'[6] The result was that the Gentiles, who had 'robbed' the Israelites in the days of their slavery, were themselves robbed, in their turn, but in a different way, when they became 'prey' to the Israelites. This is the point of the promises which Jesus made, first, to a group of the Apostles: 'I will make you fishers of men,'[7] and then to one of them: 'Henceforth, thou shalt catch men.'[8] Thus the Gentiles were to become 'prey' in the good sense that they were to be goods plundered from the 'strong man,' when he was bound by One still stronger.[9]

Here is still another illustration taken from the same Prophet: 'And it shall come to pass in that day that I shall seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the

3 Zach. 2.8,9.
4 Matt. 15.24.
5 John 7.39.
6 Ps. 17.44.
7 Matt. 4.19.
8 Luke 5.10.
9 Matt. 12.29.

inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of mercy; and they shall look upon me, as one whom they have insulted and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for a beloved son and they shall grieve over him as the manner is to grieve for the death of the only begotten.'[10] Now, no one will question that it belongs to God 'to destroy all the nations' that are hostile to the holy city of Jerusalem and that 'come against' her in the sense of being opposed to her (or, as other versions have it, 'come down upon her') in order to conquer her. And it equally belongs to God to 'pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants' of that city 'the spirit of grace and mercy.' This, I repeat, belongs to God, in whose name the Prophet is speaking; yet the God who performs these great and divine actions is clearly revealed as Christ in the words that follow: 'And they shall look upon me as one they have insulted, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for a beloved son and they shall grieve over him as the manner is to grieve for the death of the only begotten.'

Certainly, in the day of judgment, the Jews, including those who are to receive the spirit of grace and mercy, will grieve for the insults heaped upon Christ in His passion. They will repent when they see Him coming in His majesty, and when they recognize Him as the One whom, in the person of their fathers, they mocked in the days of His lowliness. And those very fathers, who were directly responsible for the great outrage, will see Him when they rise from the dead in a resurrection that will be, not for the sake of purification, but of punishment. It is not, therefore, to such 'fathers' that the words of the text, 'the inhabitants of Jerusalem,' refer but, rather, to those of their descendants who are destined to believe in the days of the preaching of Elias. And, of course, even these converts will still grieve, though they were no more responsible for the actions of their fathers than the present-

10 Zach. 12.9,10.

day Jews who are sometimes called 'Christ-killers.' Of course, when the Jews who are to become believers through the 'spirit of grace and mercy,' and who are not to be punished along with their impious ancestors, grieve as though they were responsible for the deeds of their fathers, their grief will be one inspired, not so much by a sense of guilt, but rather by a sense of gratitude.

It is worth noticing that, where the Septuagint text reads, 'And they shall look upon me as one whom they have insulted,' the Vulgate[11] has: 'whom they have pierced.' This makes the allusion to Christ crucified clearer than ever. However, the word which the seventy translators preferred to use has a wider reference to the whole passion, since Christ was 'insulted' in His arrest and imprisonment, in the trial and the ignominy of the robe they put upon Him, in the crown of thorns and the blows from the reed, in the mock bending of knees and in the carrying of the cross, and, finally, He was insulted when He was hanging on the cross. If only we combine the two readings, 'insulted' and 'pierced,' we get a much fuller picture of our Lord's passion than by taking either the Septuagint or the Vulgate reading by itself.

The conclusion, then, is that, when we read in the prophetical books that 'God' is to come to pronounce the last judgment, we do not need any indication more specific than the mention of the judgment to realize that it is Christ who is meant. The Father, of course, will judge, but He will do so by means of the coming of the Son of Man. Although the Father will manifest Himself by His presence, He will not 'judge any man, but all judgment he has given to the Son.'[12] The Son, on the other hand, will manifest Himself as a man who is to judge, because it was as a man that He was judged.

11 *Sane ubi dixerunt septuaginta interpretes . . . sic interpretatum est ex Hebraeo.*
12 John 5.22.

This is confirmed by a passage in the Prophet Isaias, where God uses the names of Jacob and Israel to indicate Christ, who assumed His body from their descendants. The passage reads: 'Jacob my son, I will uphold him; Israel my elect, my soul has assumed him. I have given my spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry out nor cease, neither shall his voice be heard outside. The bruised reed he shall not break and the smoking flax he shall not quench. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall shine and shall not be broken until he set judgment on earth; and in his name shall the Gentiles hope.'[13] It is true, indeed, that the Vulgate text has 'my servant' in place of 'Jacob' and 'Israel,' but the Septuagint translators preferred to make the meaning more explicit, namely, that the prophecy concerns the 'Highest' in so far as He became the 'lowliest,' in the 'form of a servant.' Hence they placed the name of that man from whose stock the 'form of a servant' was assumed. It was to Him that the Holy Spirit was 'given' and this was made manifest, as the Gospel tells us, under the form of a dove.[14] It was He who brought forth 'judgment to the Gentiles,' in the sense that He predicted to them a judgment of which they had no knowledge. In His meekness He did not 'cry out,' nor did He 'cease' from preaching the truth. His voice was not, nor is not, 'heard outside,' because those who are 'outside,' who are cut off from His Body, do not listen to Him. He did not 'break' nor 'quench' those very Jews who persecuted Him, although they were like a 'bruised reed' because of their lost innocence, and like 'smoking flax' because of the Light they lost. Rather, He spared them, in the sense that He came to be judged by them before He came to be their Judge. Of course, He 'brought forth judgment in truth' when He foretold the

13 Isa. 42.1-4.
14 Matt. 3.16.

time of their punishment to those who should persist in sin. His face 'shone' on the mount and His fame 'shone' throughout the whole world. He was not 'broken,' either in Himself or in His Church, because He has not yielded to the efforts of persecutors who have sought to crush His Church out of existence.

The time has not yet come, nor will it ever come when His enemies can say: 'When shall he die and his name perish?'

In the answer given, 'not until he set judgment on earth,'[15] we have revealed the hidden truth we have been seeking. The 'judgment' mentioned here is that last judgment which Christ is to 'set on earth' when He comes from heaven. And it is in Christ that we see already fulfilled what is mentioned at the end of the prophecy: 'And in his name shall the Gentiles hope.' This, surely, is a fulfillment which no one can deny and, therefore, to disbelieve the rest of the prophecy is little short of impudence. For, who could have hoped to see what even those who refused to believe in Christ cannot help but see before their very eyes? There is the fulfillment, utterly undeniable, and all they can do is to 'gnash their teeth and waste away.'[16] It was certainly hard for any one to hope that the Gentiles would hope in the name of Christ when He was being arrested, bound, scourged, mocked, and crucified, and when even His disciples lost the hope they once had. Yet, the hope that hardly any one but a single thief dying on a cross could entertain is now shared by peoples everywhere on earth, who sign themselves with that very Cross on which He died, in the hope that they may escape eternal death. How, then, can anyone deny or even doubt that it is Jesus Christ who will be in charge of the last judgment, just as holy writ has preannounced? Or, if

15 Ps. 40.6.
16 Cf. Ps. 111.10.

there is any one who can doubt, he must be moved by such unbelievable hatred that he cannot trust those holy Scriptures which have demonstrated their truth to all the world.

In connection with the last judgment, therefore, we who believe can be sure of the following truths: Elias the Thesbite will return; the Jews will believe; Antichrist will persecute the Church; Christ will be the Judge; the dead will rise; the good will be separated from the wicked; the world will suffer from fire, but will be renewed. Of course, what we believe is the simple fact that all these things are to be; but how and in what sequence the events are to occur we must leave to future experience, which alone can teach these truths so much better than human intelligence can at present understand. My own view is that they will occur in the order I have just mentioned.

There now remain two Books still to be written, if I am to keep, with God's help, the promise I made when I began this work. One of these Books will deal with the pains in store for sinners and the other with the bliss of the saints. In these two Books, my main purpose will be to refute, with God's grace, those seemingly skillful arguments by which those who are wise with the wisdom of men try, unhappily, to weaken the force of God's menaces and promises, and to ridicule as false those Scriptural texts that are the very food of our saving faith. Men, however, who are wise with the wisdom of God hold that the irrefutable omnipotence of God is an unanswerable argument in favor of all of these predictions which seem too incredible to human intelligence but which are contained in holy writings whose veracity has now been established in countless ways. Men whose wisdom is according to God hold for certain, first, that God in the Scriptures could not possibly lie, and, second, that He has the power to do things that seem impossible to the unbeliever.

BOOK TWENTY-ONE

Chapter 1

THE TWO CITIES, of God and of the Devil, are to reach their appointed ends when the sentences of destiny and doom are passed by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Judge of the living and the dead. In the present Book, therefore, I must try, with the help of God, to discuss in some detail the kind of punishment which the Devil and those who belong to the city of the Devil are to endure, My reason for treating eternal pains before dealing with beatitude is that it seems harder to believe that the bodies of the damned are to remain in endless torment than to believe that the bodies of the saints are to continue without pain in everlasting felicity. Once I have proved the possibility of eternal pain, this will greatly help to show how relatively easy it is to believe in the utterly unperturbed immortality of the bodies of the saints.

This order which I have chosen to follow is not out of harmony with Scriptural use. It is true, of course, that in some cases the blessedness of the just is placed first, as in the text: 'And they who have done good shall come forth unto

resurrection of life; but they who have done evil unto resurrection of judgment.'[1] At other times, however, it comes second, as in the text: 'The Son of Man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all scandals and those who work iniquity, and cast them into the furnace of fire, where there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. Then the just will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father,'[2] and in the text: 'And these will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life.'[3] And anyone who examines the Prophets will find texts which I need not here mention, some following the one order and some the other. I hope, at any rate, that I have sufficiently explained my own choice in this matter of sequence.

Chapter 2

It is not easy to find a proof that will convince unbelievers of the possibility of human bodies remaining not merely active, alive, and uncorrupted after death, but also of continuing forever in the torments of fire. Such unbelievers are deaf to any appeal to the power of the Almighty, and demand a demonstration in terms of positive facts. When facts are reported, they deny the value of the evidence; when the evidence is produced, they declare it inconclusive. In regard to facts, it is said that certain animals live in fire, although they are mortal and, therefore, corruptible; that in certain hot springs, too hot for any hand to bear, there is found a species of worm that not merely endures the heat but cannot live without it. But even when the unbelievers see such things with their eyes (or accept reliable witnesses), they object,

1 John 5.29.
2 Matt. 13.41-43.
3 Matt. 25.46.

first, that the animals in question do not live forever and, second, that such animals feel no pain from the heat but, in fact, thrive in it. Strange unbelievers, who find it easier to believe that animals can thrive in fire than survive the pain! Surely, if it is incredible that an animal can feel a fire and go on living, it is still more incredible that it should live in a fire and not feel it. No one who can believe the second marvel has a right to doubt the first.

Chapter 3

Another argument of pagan unbelievers is that no body that can suffer pain can escape death. But how can we be sure of that? After all, their own undying demons have been known to confess that they are suffering great afflictions. Now, how can anyone be sure that these sufferings are not in the demons' bodies? It is no answer of these unbelievers to say that they are not talking of the bodies of demons but only of human bodies that can be felt and seen, bodies of flesh and blood; and that no such bodies as these can both suffer pain and escape death. This begs the whole question, by limiting the discussion exclusively to sense knowledge and experience. Of course, the only flesh they have experiental knowledge of is mortal; but it is no argument to say: *We* have no experience of immortal flesh; therefore, immortal flesh is an impossibility. Still less is it an argument to say: Wherever there is pain there is death; since, in the light of experience, what is true is: Wherever there is pain there is life.

Actually, the real point in debate is not death but life, and not merely life but eternal life. As far as pain is concerned, what we can be sure of is that wherever there is pain there is life and, in fact, that it is impossible to have pain except in something that is alive. There is, therefore, no necessary

connection, as the unbelievers hold, between pain and death. The only necessary connection is between pain and life. It is a simple fact that there are many pains that do not kill even these mortal bodies, even though they are destined to die; even when pain is an occasion of death, the real cause is the nature of the union of body and soul in this present life. The reason why a soul succumbs to pain and leaves the body is that, in this life, the link between our bodily members and the principle of their life is so weak that this link cannot stand the strain of any force that brings about very great or excessive pain. But, in the world to come, the soul and body will be so united that the bond between them can be broken neither by the power of pain nor by the passing of time.

Hence, even though in this life there is no flesh that can both feel pain and escape death, nevertheless, in the world to come, flesh will be different from what it is now, and there will be a different kind of death from the death of the body. In regard to this 'second death,' there will be no question of the soul being incapable of death, since its death will be everlasting. For, once the soul is without God, it will be incapable of escaping the pains of the body. The first kind of death drives an unwilling soul out of the body; the second death holds an unwilling soul in the body. What is common to both deaths is that it is the soul that must reluctantly suffer what the body inflicts.

The real difficulty, then, with the unbelievers is that their whole attention is so focused on the fact that, in this life, no flesh which is susceptible of pain can escape bodily death that they overlook the fact that there is a reality higher than the body. That reality is the soul, without whose presence there would be neither life nor movement in the body. What is more, it is a reality that is susceptible of pain and not susceptible of death. Here, in fact, we have the reality which, conscious as it is of pain, is immortal. And it is this

capacity for immortality (already, as we know, inherent in everybody's soul) which, in the world to come, will be present in the bodies of the damned.

Furthermore, if we examine the matter more carefully, we shall realize that so-called bodily pain really belongs to the soul. It is the soul, not the body, which is conscious of pain, even though the cause of the pain is present in the body and the pain is felt where the body is injured. So, too, it is the soul which is the source of life and of sensation in the body, even though we speak of 'living bodies' and of 'bodily sensations.' We also speak of 'bodies in pain'; but, of course, there can be no pain in a body apart from the soul.

What we should say is that 'the soul with its body' feels pain in the part of the body where something is happening to cause pain; that 'the soul without its body' feels pain (even though the soul is in the body), whenever some cause, however invisible, causes the soul to feel anguish while the body remains uninjured; and that 'the soul outside of the body' may feel pain, as in the case of the rich man in hell who cried out: 'I am tormented in this flame.'[1] On the contrary, even though we might say that 'the body with its soul' feels pain, we cannot say that 'the body without it soul' feels pain or, still less, that 'the body outside of the soul,' *corpus exanime,* feels pain.

If, then, there is any genuine argument connecting pain and death and reaching the conclusion that, because pain can occur, death is therefore possible, this argument would apply, if at all, to the death of the soul, since it is to the soul rather than to the body that pain pertains. But the fact is that the soul, which more truly feels pain than the body, cannot die. What follows is that there is no basis whatever for arguing that, because bodies in the future life are to be in pain, we therefore must believe that even in the future life they will die.

1 Luke 16.24.

It is true that the Platonists maintained that our earthly bodies with their mortal members were the root of the soul's emotions, namely, fear, desire, grief and joy (and hence in Virgil's famous line, *hinc metuunt cupiuntque, dolent gaudentque,* the *hinc* means 'from' or 'because of' the moribund members and earthly limbs mentioned in the previous line.[2] However, in Book XIV of this work,[3] we refuted the Platonists by showing that, according to their own admission, even souls which have been cleansed of every stain of bodily connection suffer the 'dire desire' by which they begin to want to return once more to their bodies. Now, where there can be desire there can certainly be pain. In fact, when desire either fails to reach what it seeks or loses the good already grasped, this frustrated desire turns into pain. Once more, our conclusion follows. If the soul (which is the main, if not the sole, seat of pain) can enjoy even the measure of immortality admitted by the Platonists, then the argument that bodies in hell will be susceptible of death because they will be in pain falls to the ground.

One last argument against the Platonists. If, as they say, the body is the cause of the soul's pain, and if the body which causes the soul to suffer does not cause the soul to die, then it is illogical, at least for them, to argue that what causes pain must bring on death. Why, then, should it not be believed that the fires of hell can cause pain to the bodies of the damned without bringing on death? After all, it is the Platonists who say that bodies cause pain to the souls without necessarily bringing on the death of the souls. Therefore, it cannot be proved that where there is pain death must necessarily follow.

2 *Aeneid* 6.731-733.
3 Cf. above, 14.3,5,6.

Chapter 4

If we may trust the reports of workers in the field of natural phenomena, the salamander lives in fire. Again, certain well-known volcanoes in Sicily have been continuously active from the earliest times down to our own day, yet, in spite of the fire, the mountains remain intact. Such facts should prove that not everything that burns is consumed; and, as we saw, the soul proves that not everything that is susceptible of pain is susceptible of death. What further evidence, then, do we need to prove that human bodies suffering the penalty of eternal pains, first, remain united with their souls in the fire; second, burn without being consumed; and, third, suffer pain without meeting death?

The truth is that God, who has endowed things with such a marvelous variety of marvelous qualities that their multitude no longer astonishes us, can give to the substance of flesh the qualities requisite for existence in the world to come. After all, it was God the Creator of all things who gave to the flesh of the peacock that quality which keeps it from decaying even when dead. I could hardly believe this to be possible when I was first told of this peculiarity. Once, however, when I was in Carthage and peacock was served at table, I took a fair slice of the breast and had it put on one side. After as many days as it takes for any other cooked meat to become high, I had it brought out and set before me. There was no offensive odor whatever. I then had the same piece of meat kept for more than a month. I still found no change in it. Then, after a whole year, the only difference was that it was somewhat dried and shriveled.

Again, was it not God who gave to straw a power so strange that it keeps snow cold enough not to melt and raw fruits warm enough to ripen? Or who can explain the marvels of fire? Bright as it is in itself, it blackens everything it

burns; for all its lovely color, it discolors almost everything it licks with its flames. For example, it turns the blazing glow of burning coal into the black ugliness of cinders. Yet it is bound by no fixed and fast rule; stones, on the contrary, under intense heat become incandescent. And, curiously enough, although the flames are reddish, the stones turn white—which is a color more appropriate to the fire. There is a contrary effect on the wood which is burned in order to heat the stones, although wood and stone are not, by nature, contraries, as white and black are contraries. Yet, in fire, stones become white and wood becomes black. The same bright fire that makes stones brighter makes logs darker, yet neither the fire nor the stone would be bright except for the logs!

Or consider the marvelous qualities of charcoal. It is so brittle that it breaks at the lightest tap and is crushed by the slightest pressure, yet it is so strong that it is neither damaged by dampness nor decays with old age. This is so much the case that, when boundary markers are set up, people put pieces of charcoal below them to serve as a permanent proof in years to come, so that anyone who denies the position of the boundary can be convinced by the presence of the charcoal. Yet the paradox is that while wood, from which the charcoal is made, would have long since rotted in wet ground, what kept the charcoal intact so long was that most destructive of all things—fire!

Or take a look at the miracle of lime. First, it shares in that marvel of stone which I just mentioned, namely, that it becomes white in fire while so many other things turn black. More than that, lime becomes, in a mysterious way, so impregnated with fire that a lump of lime which feels cold to the touch keeps latent within it the slumbering embers of a fire which no sense can perceive but which experiment can show to have been there all the time. That is why we speak

of quick, or living, lime as though this unsuspected heat were a principle life, like the invisible soul of a visible body. But there is a further paradox. The fire latent in lime is a fire that flares up when it is put out! For, to bring the latent heat to life, the lime is dampened by, or dipped into, water, with the result that what was cold before now becomes hot, and by means of something we normally use to make hot things cold. But then, hardly has the hidden fire come to life when, like the departing soul of the dying lime, it takes its leave, and the lime lies cold as in death. In fact, no amount of water can now bring the lime back to life, so that what we once called quick or living we now call slaked or dead!

Surely, you would think that no further marvel could be added to this. But listen to this! If, instead of water, you use oil—the very food of fire—no amount of dampening or dipping brings out the heat! Now, if anyone were told or read in a book of a marvel like this happening to some stone in far-off India—and so very difficult to verify—he would either say that the story was a lie or, at least, he would be immensely surprised. And so it is with marvels no less astonishing that happen in daily experience; they no longer surprise us, merely because we are used to them. Even when the wonders of India reach us at last from that remotest corner of the globe, we give up being astonished.

This is the case with diamonds. Plenty of people now have them, and they can be seen in the shops of every goldsmith and jewelry designer. Yet, a diamond is so marvelously hard that neither iron nor fire can crack it. Only goat's blood, so they say, is potent enough for that. Now, the marvel of this hardness amazes only those who are unfamiliar with diamonds, not those who own them or know about them. Many who have never seen a demonstration of this hardness will simply not believe it, or, if they believe, their astonishment is merely the wonder of ignorance. When experience comes,

this wonder becomes astonishment in the presence of the unusual, but when the experience is repeated, familiarity soon saps the stirrings of excitement.

Or take the lodestone. Everyone now knows of its marvelous magnetic power of attracting iron, but when I first saw one I was immensely amazed. First of all, it drew an iron ring to itself; then it kept it suspended. Next, I saw a second ring attracted by the first, and hang onto it as though the stone had communicated its power of attraction to the ring; and so with a third ring, and a fourth. Finally, there was a chain of rings hanging in the air, not held together like links, but holding onto each other by sheer attraction. Surely, the power of the stone by itself is marvelous enough, but what shall we say of the marvel of a power communicated to so many rings and holding them together by invisible bonds?

A still more astonishing fact was told me by my brother bishop, Severus of Mileve. Once when he was dining with Bathanarius, formerly Count of the Province of Africa, he saw the count take out a magnet and hold it under a silver plate on which he had placed a piece of iron. Then as the count moved the magnet in his hand, the iron filing began to move. The silver plate remained unaffected, but, however quickly the magnet was moved, this way and that, the iron on the plate moved correspondingly. One of these marvels I have seen for myself; and the other I have been told by a man whom I trust as I would my own eyes. Now for something I read in a book. It is said that, when a diamond is placed near a lodestone, the stone no longer attracts the piece of iron or, if the iron was already holding onto the stone, the iron drops off as soon as the diamond is brought near.

These lodestones come from far-off India, but, now that we have become used to them, we have ceased to be astonished. And, of course, those who export them and find it so

easy to get them must be even less astonished and, no doubt, think as little of them as we do of lime. For, even when lime is made hot by water that ought to cool it and remains cool in spite of being dipped in oil that ought to heat it, the wonder is now so familiar that no one is astonished.

Chapter 5

Such, then, are but a few of the natural marvels which everyone has seen or could easily verify, and of which unbelievers might fairly be asked to give us their explanation. At any rate, they are ready enough to demand from us explanations even of facts which transcend human intelligence and cannot be explained. The skeptics go farther and charge us with insincerity when we say that there have been (and will be) divine miracles which we cannot parallel in their personal experience. So long, at least, as they are convinced that there are natural wonders which are humanly inexplicable, they have no right to argue that this or that fact never has occurred or ever will occur, merely because no rational explanation can be given. After all, the natural marvels are established facts, even though no rational explanation of the phenomena is at hand.

As for the multitude of marvels described in books, I shall limit myself to a handful of phenomena which are happening in definite places in our own day, and are not merely written records of a distant past. The facts I am about to mention can be verified by anyone who has the will and the means to travel. For example, at Agrigentum in Sicily, as Pliny[1] assures us, there is a salt which flows like water when thrown on a fire and crackles as though burning when thrown into water. In the land of the Garamantes, there is a well in

1 *Natural History* 31.7.

which the water during the day is too cold to be drunk and, at night, is too hot to be touched. In Epirus, there is another well whose water not only puts out lighted tapers but, what surely is unique, can light them again after they have been already put out! In Arcadia, there is found a substance called asbestos (which is Greek for 'inextinguishable') because, once it starts burning, the fire never stops. The wood of a species of fig tree growing in Egypt sinks instead of floating in water and, what is really remarkable, when it becomes thoroughly soaked and ought to be heavier, it rises again to the surface. In the land of Sodom, there are apples that apparently grow to maturity, but as soon as you try to bite them or press them they crumble into dust and disappear like smoke. There is a Persian mineral called pyrite (from *pyr,* Greek for 'fire') which will burn your hand if you hold it too tightly, and a crystal called selenite (from *selēnē,* Greek for 'moon') whose brilliance varies with the waxing and waning of the moon. In Cappadocia, there are foals that are sired by the wind and live for three years only. An island off the coast of India called Thylos is unique in this, that no tree growing there is ever completely stripped of its leaves.

Now let the infidels, who are skeptical of the miracles in Scripture, explain marvels like these—if they can. There are innumerable other facts like these, not just historical records of happenings past and gone, but facts which are geographically verifiable. But to mention more would take me too far from the subject in hand. My only point is that the skeptics who deny the divine inspiration of Scripture, merely because they contain miracles which are, in fact, no more incredible than the marvels I have been mentioning, should try to explain these marvels.

It is, the skeptics tell us, rationally inadmissible that bodies should burn and suffer, yet not be consumed and perish in the flames. Remarkable rationalists, these! They take it for

granted that they can give a rational explanation of all the established wonders in the world. Very well, let them explain a few of the marvels I have mentioned. They accept these marvels, because they know them as facts, but if they did not know them and heard us say they were marvels that were to occur in the future, they would be even more skeptical of these known facts than they now are in regard to what I am saying about the living bodies of men which are to suffer the eternal torments of fire without ever dying. Suppose I were to say that, in the world to come, there will be salt that flows like water when put in fire and crackles as though burning when put in water; or a well that is too hot to be touched in the cool of night and too cold to be drunk during the heat of the day; or a mineral that burns a hand that holds it tightly; or a substance that burns forever once it is set on fire; or, in fact, any of those marvels I selected for mention, out of a mass of others that I have left unmentioned? If I said to the skeptics that marvels like these would occur in the world to come, they would sneer: 'If you want us to believe you, give us a rational explanation of the marvels, one by one.' And, of course, I would have to confess: 'This is impossible. Many marvels of God are too much for the powers of poor human reason to explain. Nevertheless, human intelligence can be perfectly sure that the Almighty had His reason for doing what man's reason cannot rationally explain. Moreover, however uncertain men may be of the purposes of God, they can be perfectly certain that, whatever His purposes, He has the power to achieve them. And, therefore, since we cannot believe that God is lacking in either power or truthfulness, we ought to believe what He tells us to believe.'

Such is our answer. Now let us listen to what the denouncers of faith and the demanders of reason have to say when we ask them to give us their rational explanation of phenomena which, as they admit, are rationally inexplicable. They

have no answer when the phenomena are in seeming contradiction to human reason. Nevertheless, they would demand that we explain them, if *we* should say that these marvels were to occur in the life to come, just as we do say that the realities promised by faith will be fulfilled in the future life.

The conclusion is that, just as the marvels of nature are not non-existent merely because man has neither the wit to see nor the words to say what mysterious purposes God has in these works, so it is with the revelations of the world to come. The simple truth is that man's reason is no less baffled by many of the marvels of nature than it is by the mysteries of faith.

Chapter 6

To what I have been saying, the skeptics may reply: 'We believe neither the tales as told nor the reports in the books. Both are false.' Or they may try to put us into a dilemma by this argument: 'If you believe tales of that sort, you ought also to believe this one taken from the same sources. There is (or used to be) a temple of Venus in which there is a lamp stand carrying a light that is exposed to the elements. It burns so intensely that neither wind nor rain can ever put it out. Like the inextinguishable stone, it is called the inextinguishable light, the *lychnos ásbestos*.' The point here is that, if we say we do not believe the tale, we weaken our witness for the other stories; if we do believe, then we strengthen the case for the pagan divinities. But our answer is the one I gave above in Book XVIII of this work,[1] namely, that we are not committed to believe all that the pagan historians relate, because, as Varro himself admits, on many points you would think they were deliberately at pains to contradict one another. We are free, therefore, to accept such of their state-

1 Cf. above, 18.8.

ments as are not in conflict with what is said in books that we are bound to believe. In any case, the only marvels we really need, to prove to the skeptics the credibility of miracles in the world to come, are the marvels which are verifiable in personal experience or by the word of reliable witnesses who can be easily produced.

As for the inextinguishable light in the temple of Venus—that drives us into no logical corner. Rather, it opens up a wide field for discussion in our favor. We are ready to admit that, in addition to the inextinguishable light, there are many marvels wrought by the skill of man and by tricks of magic. Of these latter, some are done by men who have learned diabolical arts and others by demons doing their own tricks. To deny miracles of that sort would be to impugn the veracity of the Scriptures which we trust. Hence, in regard to that famous light, we can say that it was made inextinguishable either by man using some mechanical device involving the use of 'asbestos'; or by means of magic, in order to fill the worshipers in the temple with awe; or by some demon who, under the name of Venus, has made his presence there so powerfully felt that not only did the prodigy first appear but has continued to be seen ever since.

The fact is that demons are often drawn to take up an abode in this or that creature that delights them in one way or another, although, of course, these creatures were not made by them, but by God. However, unlike animals that are drawn to food, the demons, like rational spirits, are drawn to meaningful symbols that give them some special satisfaction. These may be minerals and plants of one sort or another, or trees and animals, or incantations or rites. When, however, they are attracted by men, the men must first be seduced by the cunning of the demons, who pour into human hearts some secret poison or who appear under the guise of affection. And, once a handful of men have been made the

disciples of demons, these men in turn become masters of multitudes of other men. The latter could not have known, without others to teach them, what this or that demon desires or dreads, or by what incantations he can be invited or compelled to appear. It was in this way that magic and magicians came into the world.

It is when demons transfigure themselves into angels of light that they get their strongest hold on the hearts of men, and this hold is their highest glory. Thus it is that the more marvelous the doings of the demons are—and we must admit that they are both many and marvelous—the more men must be on their guard. But my only point at present is that these marvels substantiate my argument. For, if unholy demons have so much power, how much mightier are the holy angels, and how still more powerful is God who gave to the angels their power of working miracles of such magnitude.

Thus, the argument runs as follows. Even the mechanical tricks which human art can contrive with the help of some creature of God are so many and so marvelous as to convince the ignorant that the marvels are miracles of God. Take, for example, the trick of the two magnets in one of the temples. There is a magnet in the floor and another in the vault, so adjusted that an idol made of iron remains suspended in mid-air between them, and to anyone not in the know the suspension looks like the action of God.[2] And, as I mentioned, something of the sort was the case with the light of Venus which was kept perpetually burning by the skill of an artisan and a lamp of asbestos. Yet more wonderful still are tricks of magicians—sorcerers and enchanters as they are called in our Scripture; so wonderful, in fact, that no less a poet than Virgil felt he was expressing public opinion when he says of the powers of a sorceress:

2 The marvels told in Pliny, *Natural History* 34.14.148, and retold in Rufinus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.23.

Her incantations fill men's hearts at will
With promised peace or threatened woes, and turn
Backward the courses of the streams and stars,
Call spirits from the night, and make the earth
Shake the tall ashes from the mountain tops.[3]

Now, if men and magic can work such wonders, then all these things which are so hard for the skeptics to believe are easy for Omnipotence to do. For, it was God who gave to stones and all things else their power; to men, the art to use them in so wonderful a way; to angels, a nature beyond all living things on earth. Therefore, far beyond all other wonders is God's wonderful power and, beyond all art, God's wisdom in what He makes, orders, and allows, and in the way He uses all that He has made.

Chapter 7

All this being so, why should God be unable to raise bodies from the dead and allow the bodies of the damned to suffer in eternal fire, seeing that He made a universe filled with uncounted miracles in the heavens and on earth, in the air and in the ocean—a universe, therefore, which is a greater and nobler miracle than any of the miracles of which it is full?

Our adversaries are inconsistent. They believe that there is a God who made the universe, and that He created Intelligences that are used by Him to run the universe. They not merely do not deny but insist that there are powers that can work miracles—either natural, magical, or demoniacal. Yet, when we cite examples of marvelous powers in things which are neither human, nor spirits endowed with reason, as was the case in some of the examples I cited, our opponents have

3 *Aeneid* 4.487-491.

but one answer: 'The force here is purely natural; this is the way their natures work; each nature has its own peculiar powers.' Thus, the only reason why the salt of Agrigentum flows in fire and crackles in water is because it is its nature to do so. You would think, rather, that it is against its nature, since it is natural for water, and not for fire, to melt salt; natural for fire, and not for water, to heat salt. But to this the answer given is: 'Ah, but it is the natural peculiarity of this particular salt to act in a way contrary to other salt.' So, too, with the well of the Garamantes, which is too cold by day and too hot by night and, therefore, always unpleasant to touch. And so with that other well which is cold and fire-extinguishing like other wells, but marvelously unlike them when it lights an extinguished torch. The same explanation goes for the inextinguishable asbestos, which has no fire of its own, but when set on fire never stops burning. And so on. I need not repeat the other marvels. They all involved a peculiarity that seems contrary to nature, but in every case the explanation offered is: 'This is their nature.'

Certainly, that explanation is brief enough and, for all I know, sufficient. Why, then, do these skeptics object to our explanation, 'This is the will of Almighty God.' After all, God is the Creator of all natures, and when something seems impossible and incredible and people ask us to explain it, surely, our answer is better than theirs. The whole point of being Almighty is that God has the power to do whatever He wills to do, and He has shown this power in creating so many things that would certainly seem impossible were they not before our very eyes or, at least, testified by reliable witnesses. Some of the examples I have given are known by everybody; others are less well known. As for the marvels recorded in writings but unconfirmed by eye-witnesses, no one can be blamed for disbelief if the writers were men who could easily be wrong and if they wrote without divine inspiration.

And, therefore, I would not want anyone to be rash enough to believe all the wonders I have mentioned. I am not myself completely convinced, except where I have had personal experience and where verification is easy for anyone: as in the case of lime becoming hot in water and remaining cool in oil; or of magnets attracting iron by some kind of imperceptible suction, while straw remains unmoved; or of peacock's flesh remaining fresh while Plato's was putrescent;[1] or of straw being cool enough to keep snow from melting and warm enough to hasten the ripening of fruit; or of a bright fire making stones white with incandescence while making other things turn black. You get a similar anomaly when dark marks are left by clear oil or when black lines are engraved by white silver. So, too, with the contradictions connected with charcoal. It is ugly, brittle, and lasting, although it is made from wood that is lovely, hard, and subject to rapid decay. Most of these phenomena are universally or, at least, widely known; and so of others too many to mention here.

Some of the examples I know only from my reading and not from experience, and I have been unable to find reliable witnesses to confirm the stories. This is the case with the well which both puts out tapers and lights them when extinguished, and with the apples of Sodom that look so ripe but break into smoke. However, although I have never met anyone who has seen the well in Epirus, I have met people who know of just such a well near Grenoble in France. As for the apples of Sodom, the written accounts are credible enough; besides, so many people say they have seen them that I am unable to doubt them. As for the rest of the marvels I remain undecided. My only point in mentioning them is that they are taken from pagan writers and reveal how many pagans are willing to believe—without being able to explain—any number of marvels recorded in their own writings, while re-

1 . . . *non putescente pavonis cum putuerit et Platonis.*

fusing to believe us, merely because we are unable to explain something that Almighty God is to do and something which transcends not only their experience but their very understanding. Where marvels of this kind are involved, what better or more cogent explanation can anyone give than to say that it is Omnipotence who has the power and that Omnipotence will use His power to do something which He prophesied in a book in which so many other of His prophesies can be found which have, in fact, been already fulfilled. We must remember that the God who is to do the things which seem impossible is the God who foretold that He will do them, and that this is the same God who made the promise, so clearly fulfilled already, that incredible things would be accepted as credible by incredulous peoples.

Chapter 8

It is possible that skeptics, who refuse to accept the prophecy about human bodies burning forever without being consumed, will give as their reason that they already know the nature that was given to human bodies and, therefore, that they cannot say what it was legitimate to say in the case of natural marvels: 'This power is a natural power; that is the nature of the thing.' They cannot say this, because they know that it is simply not the nature of human flesh to remain unconsumed in fire. To this argument, an answer might be found in our Scriptures. For, this very human flesh that was so constituted by its nature before the fall that it could never suffer death has been so differently constituted since the fall that, as things now are, it must suffer death. This is its nature as we know it now. It is stricken with mortality. We may argue, therefore, that in the resurrection it will once more be differently constituted from what it is now.

Unfortunately, the skeptics refuse to accept the Scriptural account of man's life in Eden and, hence, his exemption from the law of death. Of course, if they did, we should not be having all this trouble to convince them of the pains of the damned in the world to come. Hence, all we can do is to offer them an argument, taken from the most scholarly of the writings which they accept, to show the possibility of a thing becoming differently constituted in nature from what it was previously known to have been.

I shall, therefore, cite a passage taken, word for word, from a work of Marcus Varro, his *Origins of the Roman People*: 'There was once a remarkable portent in the sky; for Castor reports that the planet Venus—Vesperugo, as Plautus[1] calls it, and Homer's "Hesperus, loveliest of stars"[2]—by a marvel such as never occurred before or since, once changed its color, size, shape and course. According to the famous astronomers, Adrastos of Cyzicus and Dion of Naples, this occurred during the reign of King Ogygus.' Now, so careful a writer as Varro would not use the word 'portent' in this connection unless the phenomenon seemed contrary to nature. A portent means, in ordinary parlance, 'something contrary to nature,' although, in fact, such happenings are not really contrary to nature, for the simple reason that nothing that happens by the will of God can be 'contrary to nature.' The 'nature' of any particular created thing is precisely what the supreme Creator of the thing willed it to be. Hence, a portent is merely contrary to nature as known, not to nature as it is.

Now, an immense number of portents are recorded in pagan histories. Let us, however, keep to the one point at present in debate. Nothing, I take it, has been so determined by the fixed and unchanging laws of the Author of the nature of the heavens and the earth as the ordered courses of the

1 *Amphitruo* 1.1,119.
2 *Iliad* 22.318.

stars. Nevertheless, the moment He who has supreme authority and power over everything He created willed a change, then that greatest and brightest of all the planets changed its color, size, shape, and, what is still more remarkable, the law and order of its course. Then, if ever, God played havoc with the rules—if there were any—of the astronomers, those written canons by which they calculate—unerringly, as they imagine—the past and future movements of the stars, the very rules in virtue of which they were confident in declaring that nothing like it ever happened to Lucifer before or since. Actually, as we have recorded in our Scriptures, the sun itself stood still when the holy man, Josue the son of Nun, asked that favor of God, and it remained where it was until a battle, already begun, ended in victory.[3] It even turned backward in its course in order that this portent, added to God's promise, might reveal to King Ezechias that fifteen years were to be added to his life.[4] Such are the miracles which God grants as favors to His saints; although our adversaries would attribute them—if they believed them—to the arts of magic. This was illustrated by the lines of Virgil cited above:

> Her incantations . . . turn
> Backward the courses of the streams and stars.[5]

We read in Scripture that, when the people of God were led by Josue as far as the Jordan, the waters higher up the river stood still while those below them ran downward to the sea.[6] We also read that, when the Prophet Elias passed through the water he had divided by his mantle, he was followed by his disciple, Eliseus.[7] So, too, in the reign of King Ezechias,

3 Josue 10.13.
4 Isa. 38.8.
5 *Aeneid* 4.489.
6 Josue 4.18.
7 4 Kings 2.8.

as we saw, the greatest of the heavenly bodies was turned backward in its course. On the other hand, there is no mention in Varro's account of the portent of Lucifer that it was in answer to anyone's prayer.

In regard, then, to man's knowledge of the natures of things, the unbelievers have no right to becloud the issue by their assumption that nothing, even by the power of God, can happen to a nature beyond what is known already by human experience. And remember, too, that there are qualities and powers in the natures of the commonest things that are nothing less than stupendous and would, in fact, be reckoned portents by anyone who examined them, except that men have accustomed themselves to have no wonder to spare save for things that are unusual.[8] How, for example, can anyone who reflects fail to remark the marvelous fact that human faces are, at once, so like and so unlike one another. For all the vast multitude of mankind, every human face is so like every other human face that there is no difficulty in distinguishing man's species from that of the rest of the animals; and, at the same time, every human face is so unlike every other face that there is no difficulty in telling one man from another. We say they are all alike, and we find them all different. The real marvel, however, is in the variety, for the sameness would seem to be required by the oneness of our nature. Yet the fact is that we are so used to wondering only at what is unusual that we are much more astonished to find two men looking so much alike that we are forever mistaking one for the other.

Of course, it is possible that our pagan skeptics do not even believe the portent reported by Varro—in spite of his being their most learned historian. Or perhaps they are less moved by the marvel because the change in movement did not last, and Venus returned to her original course. In that case,

8 . . . *si solerent homines mirari mira nisi rara.*

another marvel is available for them, one that can still be shown and that ought, I think, to serve as a warning. I mean the apples of Sodom. These apples remind us that, although men have discovered and become familiar with some quality in a nature, they have no right to lay down the law to God as though He had no power to change the nature into something quite different. That is the case with the land of Sodom. It was once quite different from what it is now. It used to be, if anything, rather more than less fertile than other places. In fact, in Scripture it is compared to the Garden of Eden. But, once it was stricken by the fire from heaven, it became, as the pagan historians relate and as modern travelers can see for themselves, an awesome mass of charred remains horrible to behold, and the apples that grow there are now nothing but heaps of dust enclosed in skins that look deceptively ripe. Take a look at the difference between then and now. Once there was a nature as it came from the Creator of all natures; now, by a mysterious mutation, it has been changed into this dreadfulness which is so utterly different. And, after so long a flowering, the change to decay has continued so long unchanged.

Just, therefore, as it was possible for God to create any natures He chose to create, so it is no less possible for Him to change any qualities He chooses to change in any natures He chose to create. This, then, is the root from which there has grown the whole forest of portents which the pagans have called *monstra, ostenta, portenta* and *prodigia.* There are so many that merely to recall, let alone to relate, them here would make it impossible for me ever to finish this work. A *monstrum* (from *monstrare,* to point to) means a marvel that points to some meaning. So, *ostentum* (from *ostendere,* to show) and *portentum* (from *portendere* or *praeostendere,* to show ahead of time) and *prodigium* (from *porro dicere,* to declare things a long way off) all mean a marvel that is a prediction of things to come.

Now, it is up to the pagan diviners themselves to decide whether these portents merely mislead them; or whether they enable them to make real predictions (with the promptings, of course, of spirits, whose business it is to ensnare men's minds into the dangers which curiosity deserves); or whether it is by guessing often enough that they occasionally hit on the truth. But, so far as we are concerned, what all these marvels ought to do is to reveal what God can do. Whether such happenings are contrary to nature or are merely said to be so is not the point. (Incidently, St. Paul uses this ordinary mode of expression when he speaks of the wild olive being grafted, 'against' the 'natural' branches, onto the olive and so sharing in 'the fatness of the olive tree.'[9]) *Monstra, ostenta, portenta* and *prodigia* ought to point to, show, show ahead of time, say ahead of time, in a word, predict that God will one day do what He has foretold He will do in regard to human bodies, without any impediment, difficulty, or prohibition arising from any 'law of nature.' And as to the manner of the divine predictions, that, I think, I have sufficiently illustrated by quoting from the Old and New Testaments, if not all the pertinent texts, at least those that I thought were sufficient in a work like the present.

Chapter 9

One thing that will happen, and most certainly happen, is what God, through His Prophet, said concerning the punishment of hell being eternal: 'Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched.'[1] And it was to emphasize this further that, when the Lord Jesus was counseling us to

9 Rom. 11.17-21.

1 Isa. 66.24.

cut off members that scandalize us (meaning that we should cut off people whom we love as we love our right hand), He said: 'It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.' So for the foot: 'It is better for thee to enter into life everlasting lame, than, having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.' And for the eye, too: 'It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire, where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched.'[2] He did not hesitate to quote the same text three times. Surely, that repetition and that emphatic warning, coming from divine lips, are enough to make any man tremble.

There are some who think that both the 'fire' and the 'worm' here mentioned are meant as pains of the soul rather than of the body. Their argument is that, since those who repent too late and, therefore, in vain (because cut off from the kingdom of God) burn with anguish of soul, the 'fire' can be taken very well to symbolize this burning anguish. They quote the words of the Apostle: 'Who is made to stumble, and I am not inflamed?'[3] They hold that the 'worm' also must be taken to mean the soul, as can be seen, they think, in the text: 'As a moth doth by a garment, and a worm by the wood, so the sadness of a man consumeth the heart.'[4]

However, those who have no doubt that in hell there will be sufferings for both soul and body hold that the body will be burned in fire while the soul will be gnawed, as it were, by the 'worm' of grief. This is certainly a probable enough

2 Mark 9.42-47.
3 2 Cor. 11.29.
4 Prov. 25.20.

view, since it is absurd to think that either pain of body or anguish of soul will be lacking there. For myself, however, it seems preferable to say that both 'fire' and the 'worm' apply to the body, and that the reason for making no mention in Scripture of the anguish of the soul is that it is implied, though not made explicit. When the body is in such pain, the soul must be tortured by fruitless repentance. Take, for example, this text of the Old Testament: 'The vengeance on the flesh of the ungodly is fire and worms.'[5] It would have sufficed to say: 'The vengeance on the ungodly.' What, then, could have been the reason for saying 'on the flesh of the ungodly,' except that both 'fire' and 'the worm' are to serve as punishment for the body? However, it may be argued that 'vengeance on the flesh' was meant to imply that the vengeance is to fall on man, in so far as he has lived according to the flesh. In support of this interpretation, there are the words of St. Paul: 'For if you live according to the flesh you will die,'[6] words implying that it is because a man lives according to the flesh that he will suffer the 'second death.' Thus, each of us is free to make his own choice, either attributing 'fire' (taken literally) to the body, and 'the worm' (in a figurative sense) to the soul, or attributing both 'fire' and 'the worm,' in their literal meanings, to the body.

Suffice it to say that argument enough was given above to prove, first, that living creatures can continue in fire without being consumed and in pain without suffering death; second, that this is in virtue of a miracle of the omnipotent Creator; and, third, that anyone who denies the possibility of this miracle is simply unaware of the Source of all that is wonderful in all natures whatsoever. This Source is God. It is He who made all the natural marvels, great and small, which I have mentioned and incomparably more which I did

5 Eccli. 7.19.
6 Rom. 8.13.

not mention, and it is He who embraced all these miracles within a single universe which is itself the greatest of all these natural miracles. And so, I repeat, each one is free to choose whichever of the two interpretations he finds more satisfactory, namely, that 'the worm,' too, in its literal sense, applies to the body or that 'the worm' is to be taken in a figurative sense to apply to the soul. Which of the two views is true the future reality will soon enough reveal, for then the knowledge of the saints will be in need of no experience of these sufferings but only of that full and perfect wisdom which will suffice to teach them all such truth; for, now 'we know in part,' waiting for the time 'when that which is perfect has come.'[7] The one thing which we may by no means believe is that bodies in hell will be such that they will be unaffected by any pains inflicted by fire.

Chapter 10

This is the place to ask: How can the wicked spirits suffer by contact with fire, unless the fire, like anguish of soul, is immaterial rather than a material fire that pains by contact, as in the case of the bodies which are there tormented? The answer is: One and the same fire will serve as punishment for both men and devils, as we can see from the words of Christ: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'[1]

It may be, as scholars have speculated, that the demons have bodies of their own, composed of the kind of dense moist air which we feel, by impact, when the wind is blowing. That such air is highly susceptible to fire can be felt by any-

7 1 Cor. 13.9,10.

1 Matt. 25.41.

one who is scalded by the steam of a hot bath. Before such steam could scald, it had to be heated; to be active, it had to be passive, that is, to suffer. On the other hand, if one insists that demons have no bodies, there is no call for any elaborate research nor any need for fierce debate. It surely is enough to say that by some means, however mysterious, immaterial spirits can be sensitive to the pains of material fire in the same way that human spirits, which are no less immaterial, can be enclosed in their bodily members during life and, in the life to come, will be indissolubly united with their bodies. In the same way, the spirits of demons or, rather, the spirit-demons will be united to the material fires in which they must suffer, however incorporeal and immaterial they may be. This union, of course, will not be such that the spirits are breathed like life into the flames, so as to produce living beings consisting of spirit and matter. Nevertheless, as I have suggested, there will be a real union effected in some mysterious and indescribable manner, so that, although no life will be communicated to the flames, pain will be communicated from the fire. After all, the manner in which our spirits are united with our bodies in order to make us living beings is extraordinarily mysterious and incomprenhensible to us, even though we are just such a union.

I am tempted to say that spirits which are incorporeal will burn in fire in the way that the rich man was burning in hell when he said: 'I am tormented in this flame.'[2] But, of course, I can see that someone would remind me that the 'flame' in question was no more a flame than the 'eyes' which Dives 'lifted' in order to 'see' Lazarus or the 'tongue' which he wanted to have cooled or the 'finger' which Lazarus was to dip into water were really eyes, and the rest, in a world of disembodied souls. The fact is that the 'flame' by which the rich man was tormented was as immaterial as the drop

2 Luke 16.24.

of water he asked for, or as those images in dreams or those visions of immaterial reality which are perceived in ecstasies. Such images or visions, of course, merely have some resemblance or analogy to bodies, for, when a man—not in body, but in spirit—is in an ecstasy, he sees himself in the likeness of his body, but he cannot see himself fully as he is.

As to Gehenna, however, 'the pool of fire and brimstone,'[3] as it is called, its fire will be material and it will torment either the bodies of all the damned (both the solid bodies of men and the aerial bodies of demons) or only the bodies of men in union with their spirits; but, in that case, the bodiless demon-spirits will be tormented by a union with material flames to which the spirits communicate no life. What is certain is that both men and devils will suffer, as the Truth has told us, in the same fire.

Chapter 11

Among those against whom we are defending the City of God there are some who think it unjust that anyone should be condemned to eternal punishment for sins, however great, committed during a period of time that was relatively short. They forget that in no code that ever existed was it a point of justice that anyone should be punished for no longer a time than it took for the crime to be committed. Cicero has enumerated the eight kinds of punishment allowed by law: payment of fines, imprisonment, scourging, retaliation, disfranchisement, exile, death, and slavery. Now, which of these, with the possible exception of retaliation, can be so proportioned in time to the commission of the crime that the length of the punishment equals the time spent in perpetrating the crime? In the case of retaliation, a person suffers the precise

3 Apoc. 20.9.

injury he has inflicted, as is expressed in the Law: 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.'[1] Here it is possible for the time taken by the penal loss of an eye to be the same as the time taken in the criminal act of blinding a person.

Take, however, the case of kissing another man's wife, and suppose the punishment according to the law is scourging. The offender who took only a moment for the injury done is rightly scourged for an incomparably longer time; however short his pleasure, he suffers a protracted pain. So with imprisonment. The term imposed by the judge is never measured by the time it took to deserve the penalty, as when a slave who has insulted his master by a passing word or wounded him by a sudden blow is legally sentenced to years in chains. In the case of confiscation of goods, disfranchisement, exile, or slavery—which are often lifelong punishments without reprieve—the parallel with eternal punishment is obvious. The only reason why they cannot be eternal is that the measure of a human life span (which is the length of the punishment) cannot be stretched to infinity. Nevertheless, the crimes which are punished even by this length of pains or losses can be perpetrated in practically no time. Certainly, there is no one who imagines that the time taken to commit murder or adultery or sacrilege or any other crime that is measured not by minutes but by its intrinsic iniquity or impiety should determine the length of the penalty imposed. Where a very serious crime is punished by death and the execution of the sentence takes only a minute, no laws consider that minute as the measure of the punishment, but rather the fact that the criminal is forever removed from the community of the living. And, in fact, this removal of men from mortal society by the penalty of the first death is the nearest parallel we have to the removal of men from the immortal communion of saints by the penalty of the second

1 Exod. 21.24.

death. For, just as the laws of temporal society make no provision for recalling a man to that society, once he is dead in body, so the justice of the eternal communion makes no provision for recalling a man to eternal life, once he has been condemned to the death of his soul.

How, then, it will be objected, can it be true that, as Christ said: 'With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you,'[2] if a sin in time is punished for eternity? What those who raise this objection forget is that the equality of measure is not a matter of time to time but of crime to punishment, so that the doer of evil must suffer evil. Actually, what our Lord had in mind when He used these words was a matter of punishments imposed and punishments received, and here the measure is equal, so that, if a judge judges and sentences a man unjustly, then when he is judged and sentenced justly, the measure he received will be the measure he gave, even though what he received may not be the same as what he gave. He sinned by a judgment, he suffers by a judgment; although what he did by judgment was unjust, what he suffers by judgment is just.

Chapter 12

The reason why eternal punishment seems so hard and unjust to human feeling is that, in the present weakness of our mortal understanding, we lack the vision of that lofty and unclouded Wisdom which alone can make it possible for us to understand the enormity that was committed in man's first prevarication. The monstrousness of man's dereliction from God can only be measured by the magnitude of man's previous delight in God. If man made himself deserving of an eternal evil, it was because he drowned within himself a

2 Luke 6.38.

good that could have been eternal. The cause of the condemnation of the whole mass of mankind lies here.[1] The first man who committed the sin was punished along with the human race that was rooted in him, and so punished that no individual at all was to be freed from this just and merited punishment save by mercy and unmerited grace, and the human race as a whole was to be so divided that in those of the one portion would be revealed the power of mercy and grace and in the others the rigor of justice and retribution. Both justice and mercy were not to be revealed in all because, if all were to remain in the punishments of a just condemnation, merciful grace would appear in none and, on the other hand, if all were to be transferred from darkness to light, in no one would be revealed the truth that retribution was due. And, if there are more to reveal justice than mercy, that was to make clear that it was justice which all incurred. And although, if all paid the penalty, no one could have found fault with the justice of the One who justly demanded retribution, yet so many have been pardoned in order to give them ground for the utmost gratitude for the unmerited gift of the Pardoner.

Chapter 13

It is the view of the Platonists that, while no sin should be allowed to go unpunished, the purpose of punishment is purely remedial. This applies to all the penalties of both human and divine laws, both in this life and after death, and both for those who escape punishment in this life and for those who fail to amend when punished. It was this Platonic view that inspired the lines of Virgil which follow those in which he speaks of the emotions which arise on account of our earthly bodies and our mortal members.

1 *Hinc est universa generis humani massa damnata.*

Hence come their fears, desires, their griefs and joys,
Closed in the dungeons where no light appears.
Yet, when at last both life and light depart,
Not every evil leaves the soul in death,
Nor every weakness that the body made
Too deeply stained for death to wash away.
Hence, pains aplenty, penance for the past.
Some of the souls toss in the winds, and some,
Deep in the whirlpools of the vasty sea,
Cleanse their infected sores, and some in fire.[1]

Such is the view of those who hold that the only punishments after death are purgatorial. They think that, since water, air and fire are higher elements than earth, one or other of these elements will be used to purge away in expiatory pains whatever stains have been contracted by earthly contacts. When Virgil says: 'Some of the souls toss in the winds,' he implies punishment inflicted by air; the 'whirlpools of the vasty sea' indicate water; 'some in fire' mentions the punishing element by name. On our part, we admit that some sufferings even in this mortal life are purgative, but only in cases where the sufferers change their ways, not in cases where there is no improvement nor, still less, where sufferings make people worse. All other punishments, whether temporary or everlasting, according to the disposition of Divine Providence in individual cases, are inflicted in punishment either for sins past or present, or to serve as an exercise in, or revelation of, virtues. They may be brought about by fellow men or by angels, whether good or bad; although, when a man suffers some evil through the malice or mistake of another man, and this latter sins by reason of the ignorance or the injustice involved in the injury done, God does no wrong since what happens is allowed by His just though hidden judgment.

1 *Aeneid* 6.733-742.

Whether we suffer temporary punishments in this life only, or in the life after death, or in both, the sufferings precede that last, severe judgment. However, not all who suffer temporal punishment after death are doomed to the eternal pains that follow the last judgment. For, as I have said, what is not forgiven in this life is pardoned in the life to come, in the case of those who are not to suffer eternal punishment.

Chapter 14

Very few, indeed, are those who suffer no purgatorial pains in this life, but have them reserved for the life after death. There are, indeed, cases, as I know both from experience and from reports, of people who have reached a decrepit old age without suffering the least sickness or losing their peace of mind. Nevertheless, it remains true that mortal life, by its very nature, is one long punishment, because it is a continuous trial, as Holy Scripture proclaims in the text: 'The life of man upon earth is a trial.'[1] Take the case of children who have to be driven by painful penalties to learn their letters or their trade. Their lack of understanding or of skill is itself no small punishment. And the fact that boys so often prefer to be whipped than to learn shows that even the process of learning, to which they are driven by punishments, is itself a punishment. Who is there who does not shudder at the thought of returning to infancy; if the choice had to be made between this and death, who would not choose to die? Yet, this very infancy, beginning life, as it does, not with laughter but tears, is a kind of prophecy, for all its ignorance, of the way of woe upon which it has entered.[2] The only new-born

1 Job 7.1.

2 *Quae quidem [infantia] quod non a risu, sed a fletu orditur hanc lucem, quid malorum ingressa sit nesciens prophetat quodam modo.*

baby that ever laughed, they say,[3] was Zoroaster; but what woe that monstrous laugh portended! He became, they say, the inventor of magical arts, only to find that they failed to ward off even the enemies of the empty felicity of his life on earth, for he was beaten in battle by King Ninus of Assyria when he himself was the ruler of Bactria.

Nothing, in fact, can prevent the fulfillment of the prophecy: 'A heavy yoke is upon the children of Adam, from the day of their coming out of their mother's womb until the day of their burial into the mother of all.'[4] So that even the children who have been freed by the laver of regeneration from the only bond of sin that held them, namely, that of original sin, suffer many ills, and there are some who suffer, at times, even the attacks of malignant spirits. Happily, no such attacks—God forbid!—can do any harm, even though the attacks bring on death, so long as the children die in infancy.

Chapter 15

Nevertheless, evil as is the 'heavy yoke imposed upon the children of Adam, from the day of their coming out of their mother's womb until the day of their burial into the mother of all,' it is a marvelous reminder that we should be prudent and should understand that this life has become penal, as the price to be paid for the wickedness of sin committed in Eden, and that all the promises made to us in the New Testament have relation to a new inheritance of a new life, so that, if we will only accept the pledge in this life, we shall, in the world to come, reach the reality of which this is but the promise. Now, therefore, is the time for us to walk in hope, to move forward day after day, to put to death the deeds

3 Pliny, *op. cit.* 7.15.
4 Eccli. 40.1.

of the flesh by living according to the spirit.[1] For, 'the Lord knows who are his,'[2] and 'whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,'[3] sons by grace, not by nature.

There is but one Son of God, by nature, He who became a son of man, by mercy, for our sake, so that we who are by nature sons of man might become by grace through Him sons of God. Remaining immutable in Himself, He received from us our nature that in it He might receive us and, while holding firmly to His divinity, He made Himself a sharer in our infirmity. His purpose was that we should be transformed into something better by losing our sinfulness and mortality through sharing in His immortality and holiness and by preserving the good He put into our nature through having it fulfilled by the supreme good in the goodness of His nature. For, as we sank into this deep evil through one man's sinning, so we shall rise to that high Good through one Man's wining—the Winner of grace being also God. Yet, no man may be sure that he has passed from guilt to glory until he has reached there where all warfare is over, until that peace is in his soul which he seeks in all the ups and downs of battling in that war in which 'the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.'[4] Yet, there would have been no such war had human nature, by an effort of free choice, only remained firm in the beatitude in which it had been made. However, as things now are, the nature which rejected peace in happiness with God must now have war in misery with itself. Nevertheless, miserable as this present condition is, it is better to keep up a battle with passions than tamely submit to their tyranny. What is more, it is better to have war with the hope of eternal peace than captivity without a

1 Cf. Rom. 8.13.
2 2 Tim. 2.19.
3 Rom. 8.14.
4 Gal. 5.17.

thought of liberation. Besides, we can desire even here to be free from the war and to achieve a measure of ordered peace, for, when our souls are aflame with the fire of divine love, passions are subdued by the greater gifts and untroubled serenity follows. And if, God forbid, there seems no hope of this great boon, we should still prefer to remain in the turmoil of these battles than to give up the fight and passively accept the domination of passion.

Chapter 16

Nevertheless, this domination is inevitable in infancy and childhood, and such is the mercy of God in relation to the 'vessels of mercy' which He has fashioned for glory that in that first period of life, which passively submits to the rule of the flesh, and even in the second, in which speech is possible and infancy is passed and in which reason has not yet begun to fight but yields to practically all pleasures, however defective, because the weakness of the will makes obedience to precepts impossible, all that is necessary is the reception of the Mediator's sacraments. For, if in these years life on earth is ended, the soul is translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ free of all liability, not only to eternal pains but even to any purgatorial sufferings after death. All that is needed is spiritual rebirth to eliminate, after death, the consequences, including death, of carnal birth.

When, however, a boy reaches the age when it is possible to impose precepts on him and to bring him under the authority of law, he must take up the war against passion and carry it on like a man, if he is not to be led into sin and damnation. So long as passions have not been strengthened by constant victory they are easily conquered and put to rout, but, if they have acquired the habit of conquest and domination,

they can be defeated only by difficult effort. Nor will that effort be truly and sincerely made if the love of true holiness is lacking, and this love can be found only through faith in Christ. For, unless the spirit commends what the law commands, prohibition merely promotes the increasing power and domination of passion until it ends in guilt and sin. There are, indeed, cases where open vices are overcome by hidden vices which pass for virtues, but which are in reality the ministers of pride and of that dangerous exaltation called self-complacency. But, in truth, vices are only vanquished when they are conquered by the love of God; and this is a gift that none but God can give, and is given in no other way save through 'the Mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus,'[1] who made himself a sharer in our mortality in order to make us sharers in His divinity.

Few, indeed, are those who are so blessed that from earliest adolescence they not merely continue free from every mortal sin, whether of lust or violence or deliberate rejection of religious truth, but magnanimously conquer every carnal inclination that threatens to become their masters. The story of most people, however, is this, that, after they have become conscious of responsibility to law, they are first overcome by passion and become violators of the law, then they have recourse to grace which helps them to grieve bitterly for the past and to struggle bravely against passion until, at last, with their will in subjection to God and their reason in control of the flesh, they conquer themselves. Anyone, therefore, who wants to escape eternal punishment should be baptized and justified in Christ, and so pass sincerely from Satan to Christ. But he should hold the view that all purgatorial pains will be over before the last and tremendous judgment. As for the eternal fire, this will undoubtedly affect people differently according to their deserts and the pain will be made

1 1 Tim. 2.5.

slight or serious either by varying the degree of intensity of the fire itself, according to the guilt of the sufferers, or by varying the sensitivity of the sinners to a hell that is the same for all.

Chapter 17

And now I must turn from the pagans to deal, however gently, with some of our own tender-hearted fellow Christians, who are inclined to feel that there must sooner or later be liberation from hell, if not for all whom the perfect justice of God has judged worthy of its pains, at least for some. Their idea is that after a definite term, differing according to the greater or smaller accumulation of guilt, liberation will come. In this matter, Origen was so moved by pity as to think that even the Devil and his angels, after very severe and long-continued pains in proportion to their guilt, would be snatched from the flames to join the company of the holy angels. But Origen has rightly been reproved by the Church on more than one account. One was this view of liberation from hell. Among other condemned views was his idea of the ceaseless alternations of blessedness and misery and the unending revolutions of the wheel of the centuries which brought on these goings and returnings of one and the other. Actually, this system which seemed merciful to Origen ceases to be merciful, since it imposes on the saints real miseries and penalties and substitutes for their true and certain joy of everlasting good, unclouded by any fears, a series of false and insecure beatitudes.

Of an altogether different kind is the error of those who are moved by human sympathy to feel that the miseries of men condemned to hell must have an end. They are convinced that happiness will be eternal for all who, sooner or later, are freed from torments. If, however, such a view is good and

true merely because it is merciful, then it will be better and truer in proportion to the extension of mercy. Suppose, then, we extend and deepen the well of this mercy to include the condemned angels and say that after many centuries, however protracted, they will finally be freed. For, why should that well keep flowing until all mankind is saved and then dry up when it comes to the angels? Those who are moved by mercy do not dare so to stretch their mercy far enough to save even Satan himself. If any should be so bold, his mercy, at best, would be greater than those who do not and, therefore, his theory should be truer. But the fact is that the more merciful the theory is, the more it contradicts the words of God and, therefore, the farther it is from the truth.

Chapter 18

There are some among us, as I have learned from private conversations, who have the utmost veneration for holy Scripture and are irreproachable in their conduct, but who attribute to God even greater mercy than the others, when they propose their views on this matter. In their view, there is no denying that God has truly revealed that evil and faithless men are deserving of hell; yet, when the day of judgment arrives, mercy will triumph over justice. The merciful God, they hold, will pardon the sinners by reason of the prayers and intercession of the saints. For, if the saints prayed for sinners when the sinners were enemies and persecutors, how much more so when they see the sinners lowly, suppliant, and prostrate before them. Certainly, the argument runs, no one can believe that the saints will harden their hearts to mercy when their holiness will be fullest and most perfect. How could saints, when not yet freed from all sin, pray for their enemies, but now, when all sin is past, not pray for those

who are petitioning them? Or is it possible that God will cease to hear the prayers of so many and good sons just when, at the height of their holiness, there is nothing to hold back their prayers. Even those whose theory allows infidels and sinners to suffer at least a long time in hell before they are finally rescued quote in their favor the text: 'Has God forgotten to be merciful? Or being angered, will he shut up his mercy?'[1] Those who hold the intercession theory think they have a still better claim on this text. It is because God is angered, they say, that all who are judged by Him unworthy of eternal beatitude should be punished in eternal pain. But, for either a long, or even any, punishment to be possible God must shut up His mercy, which is what the psalm says He will not do; the text does not say: 'He will shut up for some time his mercy,' but implies that He will not shut up His mercy for a moment.

According to this theory, God's threat of judgment, even though in fact He will condemn no one, is like His threat to destroy Nineve. In neither case can there be any departure from the truth, yet, they say, that did not come to pass which He said without reservation would come to pass. God did not say: 'Nineve will be destroyed, unless there is repentance and amendment.' He foretold absolutely the future destruction of that city. What gives the threat its truth, they hold, is that God foretold the fact that the Ninevites deserved the destruction even though God did not intend to effect the destruction. It is true that God spared them because they repented, but it is equally true that God knew they would repent; nevertheless, He foretold absolutely and definitively their destruction. The reality of the destruction was contained in the truth of His anger, because as a fact they deserved destruction, but the destruction had no place in the plan of His mercy, which He did not 'shut up' even though He was

1 Ps. 76.10.

angry; therefore, He spared them, when they petitioned Him, from a punishment which, when they were rebellious, He had threatened. Therefore, the theory runs, if God so spared sinners when it meant that He would sadden His Prophet by doing so, how much more will He spare suppliants even more pitiable when all His saints will be petitioning Him to spare them? And if Scripture, they say, does not express explicitly this reasoning of their hearts,[2] that was merely to make it possible both for many to be moved to amendment by the fear of punishments, very prolonged if not eternal, and for suppliant saints to be available for those who failed to amend. At least implicitly, they think, Scripture is clear enough. What, they say, can be the meaning of the text, 'How great is thy goodness, O Lord, which thou reservest for those who fear thee,'[3] except that it was merely for the purpose of encouraging fear that such great goodness and divine mercy were kept in secret reserve? So, too, with the text: 'For God has shut up all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all.'[4] The whole point of St. Paul, they hold, is that no one will be damned.

This theory does not go so far as to exclude the Devil and his angels from either passing or permanent damnation. The upholders of the view are moved by human pity only for human beings and are really pleading their own cause by promising, in the name of some supposed general divine mercy for the whole human race, an imaginary impunity for their own depravity. And thus, as far as exalting God's mercy goes, they are beaten by those who promise impunity even to the prince of demons and his satellites.

2 . . . *quod ipsi suis cordibus suspicantur.*
3 Ps. 30.20.
4 Rom. 11.32.

Chapter 19

Another view of freedom from eternal punishment is that of those who do not extend the promise of impunity to all human beings, but only to those who, by reason of baptism, are members of the Body of Christ. As for these, it does not matter how they have lived nor whether they were heretics or great sinners. The argument for the view is found in the text: 'This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that if any one eat of it he will not die. I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever.'[1] Therefore, in this view, all those baptized must be saved from eternal death and must reach, whensoever it may be, life eternal.

Chapter 20

Still another view promises impunity, not to all baptized Christians and partakers of Holy Communion, but only to Catholics, and this irrespective of the evil of their lives, seeing that they are not merely sacramentally one with Christ, but have really eaten of the Body of Christ by being members of His Body. It is in regard to this Body that the Apostle says: 'Because the bread is one, we though many are one body.'[1] In this view, even though people later on fall into heresy or even into pagan idolatry, still, because they were once baptized and ate of the Body of Christ in the Body of Christ, that is, the Catholic Church, they cannot die forever but must eventually reach eternal life. The most that their sinfulness can do is to add length and intensity of punishment in proportion to sin, but it can never lead to eternal pain.

1 John 6.50-52.

1 1 Cor. 10.17.

Chapter 21

There are some who hold that the text, 'Whoever perseveres to the end, he shall be saved,'[1] applies exclusively to those who continue to live in the Catholic Church. However unworthily they live, they are promised that they are to be saved by fire in virtue of the foundation on which they rested. This promise is based on the text: 'For other foundation no one can lay, but that which has been laid, which is Christ Jesus. But if anyone build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—the work of each will be made manifest, for the day of the Lord will declare it, since the day is to be revealed in fire. The fire will assay the quality of everyone's work: if his work burns he will lose his reward, but himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.'[2] What the proponents of this view deduce from this text is that every Catholic Christian has Christ for his 'foundation,' a foundation which no heresy can claim once it is cut off from the unity of Christ's Body. Hence, whatever wood, hay, straw a Catholic Christian builds upon 'this foundation,' that is, however ill he lives, he will be saved 'through fire,' which is to say, he will be freed after he has endured the pains of that fire to which sinners are to be condemned in the last judgment.

Chapter 22

I have even found people holding the view that the only ones who will burn in the flame of eternal punishment are those who fail to make up for their sins by suitable almsgiving. They invoke these words of the Apostle James: 'For

1 Matt. 24.13.
2 1 Cor. 3.11-15.

judgment is without mercy to him who has not shown mercy,'[1] and from this they argue that, if a man does 'show mercy,' then to him judgment will be with mercy, so long as he continues to intersperse alms-giving with his profligacy and other wickedness. This will be so though the sinner fails to make any amendment. He may escape all punishment. At most, he will have a shorter or longer penalty and then be freed. That is why, they say, the Judge of the living and the dead deliberately omitted mention of every other distinction except the giving or not giving of alms in the words to be addressed to those on His right hand and His left, that is, to those to whom He is to give eternal life and those whom He is to condemn to eternal pain.

Hence, in this theory, the importance of the daily petition that is made in the Lord's Prayer: 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.'[2] Certainly, anyone who forgives a man who has sinned against him is an alms-giver. And it was such alms-giving that the Lord commended so highly in the words: 'For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses. But if you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses.'[3] It follows that it was with this kind of alms-giving in mind that St. James said that judgment will be without mercy to one who has not shown mercy. Nor, they insist, did the Lord make any distinction between great and small offenses, if you forgive men their offenses.' Hence the conclusion: however wickedly men continue to live to their very last day on earth, and however great or however many their sins may be, so long as this prayer is daily recited, each day, through this prayer, all offenses are forgiven. Only one condition is imposed. They must forgive with all their heart

1 James 2.13.
2 Matt. 6.12.
3 Matt. 6.14,15.

those who have sinned against them, whatever the sin and whenever the offenders ask for pardon.

Before I close this present Book, I must find an answer, with God's help, to all these difficulties.

Chapter 23

A first question to be asked and answered is: Why has the Church been so intolerant with those who defend the view that, however greatly and however long the Devil is to be punished, he can be promised ultimately that all will be purged or pardoned? Certainly, it is not because so many of the Church's saints and Biblical scholars have begrudged the Devil and his angels a final cleansing and the beatitude of the kingdom of heaven. Nor is it because of any lack of feeling for so many and such high angels that must suffer such great and enduring pain. This is not a matter of feeling, but of fact. The fact is that there is no way of waiving or weakening the words which the Lord has told us that He will pronounce in the last judgment: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'[1] In this way He showed plainly that it is an eternal fire in which the Devil and his angels are to burn. Then we have the words of the Apocalypse: 'And the devil who deceived them was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where also are the beast and the false prophet; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'[2] In the one text we have 'everlasting,' in the other, 'forever and ever.' These are words which have a single meaning in the divine Scripture, namely, of unending duration.

Thus, it is Scripture, infallible Scripture, which declares

1 Matt. 25.41.
2 Apoc. 20.10.

that God has not spared them. This is the only reason why it is held as a fixed and unchanging religious truth that the Devil and his angels are never to return to the life and holiness of the saints; nor could any more valid or cogent reason be discovered. It is from Scripture that we know that God's sentence implies that He 'dragged them down by infernal ropes to Tartarus, and delivered them to be tortured and kept in custody for judgment.'[3] They will be received into 'everlasting' fire, there to be tortured 'forever and ever.'

And since this is true of the Devil, how can men—whether all or some—be promised an escape, after some indefinitely long period, from this eternity of pain, without at once weakening our faith in the unending torment of the devils. For it is to men that the words will be said: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.' Now, if some of these men or all of them are not always to remain in everlasting fire, what ground have we for believing that the Devil and his angels are always to remain there? God's sentence will be pronounced on the wicked, both angels and men. Can we suppose that it will hold for angels but not for men? Yes; but, only if men's imaginings have more weight than God's words! Since this is quite impossible, all those who desire to escape eternal punishment should desist from arguing against God and should rather bow in obedience, while yet there is time, to the command of God. Besides, what kind of imagining is this, to take eternal punishment to mean long-continued punishment and, at the same time, to believe that eternal life is endless, seeing that Christ spoke of both as eternal in the same place and in one and the same sentence: 'And these will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life.'[4] If both are 'everlasting,' then either both must

3 2 Pet. 2.4.
4 Matt. 25.46.

be taken as long-lasting but not endless or else both must be taken to be unendingly perpetual. For the everlastingness of the punishment and the everlastingness of the life are related as equal to equal. It is highly absurd to say in one and the same sense: 'Life everlasting will be endless, but everlasting punishment will come to an end.' Therefore, since the eternal life of the saints is to be endless, there can be no doubt that eternal punishment for those who are to endure it will have no end.

Chapter 24

The argument just given holds against those who try to build a case for themselves by opposing to the words of God's justice His still greater mercy. The true meaning of the words, they say, is not that men who are condemned will actually suffer the punishment, but merely that they deserve to suffer. God will surely grant pardon in answer to the prayers of the saints who on the day of judgment will be praying for their enemies as only saints can, and their prayers will be especially efficacious in moving God to hear them, since the saints on that day will be utterly free from sin. And with this same perfect holiness, and with these prayers so pure, so full of mercy, so powerful to obtain all favors, the saints will surely intercede for the fallen angels, even though eternal fire is ready to receive them, and those prayers will move God to mitigate His sentence and so bend it into something better that the guilty will be freed from the fire.

Now, I ask if there is anyone rash enough to affirm as a fact that the holy angels, along with holy men who will then be on a par with the angels of God, will pray for the damned, both human and angelic, that they may be freed by mercy from the sufferings which, in fact, they certainly deserved. This is something which no man of sound faith has ever said,

something which no believer will ever say. For, if this could be said, there is no reason why here and now the Church, taught and bidden by God to pray for enemies, should not pray for the Devil and his angels. There is, in fact, a reason why the Church does not now pray for the fallen angels, though they are known to be the Church's enemies, and it is for this same reason that on the day of judgment she will not, for all the perfection of her holiness, pray for men who are damned to suffer in everlasting fire. She does, indeed, now pray for all living human beings who are reckoned as her enemies. She prays now because now is the time of fruitful repentance. But the main purpose of her prayer is that indicated by St. Paul: 'in case God should give them repentance and they recover themselves from the snare of the devil, at whose pleasure they are held captive.'[1] But if, even now, the Church knew with certainty some of those who are still living but are already predestined to follow the Devil into eternal fire, she would no more pray for them than she does for the Devil. It is because the Church has been given no certainty in regard to any individual that she prays for all her living, human enemies, though, of course, her prayer is not in all cases answered. Her prayer is answered only in the cases of her enemies who are predestined. In those cases, the answer to the prayer is that the enemies become children of the Church. It is different in the case of those whose hearts are to remain impenitent until death and who are not to be converted from enemies into sons. The Church does not pray for the spirits of such impenitents once they are dead. The reason is that anyone who has failed during life to be converted to Christ is reckoned as being already on the side of the Devil.

It is, therefore, for one and the same reason that no prayers are to be offered on the day of judgment for men damned to eternal pain, and that neither now nor then are prayers

1 2 Tim. 2.26.

offered for the souls of those who die without faith or repentance. There are, of course, certain souls for whom the prayer either of the Church or of devout individuals is heard. These are the souls of baptized Christians whose lives on earth were so free from greater sins that they are not reckoned unworthy of God's mercy after death, yet were not so perfect in virtue as to stand in no need of such mercy. And so, even after the resurrection of the dead, there will be no lack of those who will be granted mercy after enduring the pains which are suffered by the spirits of the dead, and so will not be cast into everlasting fire. For it would never have been said in regard to certain sins that they would be forgiven neither 'in this world nor in the world to come,'[2] unless it were true that there are some persons who will be forgiven in the world to come even though they remain unpardoned on earth.

On the other hand, we have these clear but contrasted declarations of the Judge of the living and the dead: 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . Depart from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these will go into everlasting punishment but the just into everlasting life.'[3] It would be an excess of presumption to say in regard to any of these whom God has condemned to everlasting punishment that their punishment will not be everlasting. The effect of such presumption would be either despair or doubt in regard to the eternity of everlasting life.

When, therefore, anyone reads in the psalm, 'Will God forget to show mercy, or will he in his anger shut up his mercies,'[4] he should not take this to bolster the opinion that God's sentence holds for good men but not for wicked men,

2 Matt. 12.32.
3 Matt. 25.34,41,46.
4 Ps. 76.10.

or that it holds for good men and bad angels but not for wicked men. Actually, the words of the Psalmist have reference to the 'vessels of mercy' and the 'sons of the promise,' of whom the Psalmist himself was one. Note that as soon as he had written, 'Will God forget to show mercy or will he in his anger shut up his mercies,' he subjoined these words: 'Now have I begun: this is the change of the right hand of the most High.' He gave, in fact, the interpretation of his his own words: 'Will he in his anger shut up his mercies?' For, the anger of God includes this mortal life in which man has become 'like to vanity: his days pass away like a shadow.'[5] Now, in this 'anger,' God does not forget to show mercy, since He 'makes his sun to rise on the good and the evil, and sends rain on the just and the unjust,'[6] and in this sense He does not 'in his anger shut up his mercies.' This is particularly true of the mercy alluded to by the Psalmist in the words: 'Now have I begun: this is the change of the right hand of the most High.' For, during this grief-filled life which is 'the anger of God,' He changes 'vessels of mercy' for the better, because, even though His anger still remains in the misery of this mortality, not even in His anger does He shut up His mercies.

In this way, then, we can see the full truth of the divinely inspired psalm. There is no need, therefore, to interpret it in relation to that eternal punishment in which those who do not belong to the City of God will suffer endlessly. However, if there remain those who insist on stretching the words to include the torments of the wicked, they should at most take the words to mean that the anger of God which is implied in the prophecy of eternal suffering will certainly remain in the wicked and that if, in this anger, God does not shut up His mercies, it is only in the sense that He will let the wicked suffer less than they deserve to suffer. The words

5 Ps. 143.4.
6 Matt. 5.45.

should not be taken to mean that the wicked will be wholly exempt from the pains or that the pains will finally come to an end. The most that can be said is that the pains suffered may be lighter and milder than the wickedness has deserved. In this way the anger of God will endure, yet in His anger He will not shut up His mercies. As for myself, I give no approval to this opinion, even though I raise no objection against it.

But there are those who think there is more bark than bite[7] in Scriptural threats such as: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into everlasting fire. . . . These will go into everlasting fire. . . . They will be tormented . . . forever and ever. . . . Their worm dies not and the fire is not quenched.'[8] Here it is not I, but divine Scripture itself that offers patent and potent refutation and rejection.[9] Take the Ninevites. It was in this life that they did penance, and for this reason it was fruitful. They sowed, if I may so speak, in that field in which it is God's will that what is to be reaped with joy should be sown with tears. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the destruction which God predicted was, in their case, fulfilled. To see this, one has only to notice that, with God, compassion and passion are equally effective.[10] For, sinners are destroyed in two ways. In the case of the Sodomites, it is the people who are destroyed in punishment for their sins. In the case of the Ninevites, it is the sins that are destroyed by the penance of the people. Thus, what God predicted occurred. The Nineve that was evil was destroyed, and a good Nineve was built in its place. The walls and the houses stood, but the evil ways of the people perished. Thus, although the Prophet was saddened to see that the particular fears he in-

7 . . . *putant minaciter potius quam veraciter dictum.*
8 Matt. 25.41,46; Apoc. 20.10; Isa. 66.24 (Mark 9.44).
9 . . . *planissime atque plenissime redarguit ac repellit.*
10 . . . *Deus non solum iratus, verum etiam miseratus evertat.*

spired in the people were not fulfilled, what God foresaw and predicted occurred, since God foresaw a better way to fulfill what His prediction foretold.

Those who are perversely compassionate should notice the limits which God imposes on His mercy. It is all very well to read the text: 'O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden from them that fear thee.' But let them read what follows: 'Which thou hast perfected for them that hope in thee.'[11] What is the meaning of this contrast, 'hidden from them that fear . . . perfected for them that hope,' except that those who are moved by fear of punishment to found their righteousness in the Law find that God's justice is hidden. It is not sweet for them because they do not know it. They have not tasted it, because they have not hoped in Him but, instead, hope in themselves. That is why the multitude of God's sweetness is hidden from them. It is true that they fear God, but it is the fear of a slave which has no roots in love. 'Perfect love casts out fear.'[12] Hence, for those who hope in Him, He perfects His sweetness by breathing His love into them. Thus it is that by the chaste fear, which love does not cast out but which endures forever and ever, they glory in the Lord when they glory at all. The fact is that God's justice is another name for Christ—for Christ who, as St. Paul puts it, 'has become for us God-given wisdom and justice and sanctification, and redemption'; so that, just as it is written, 'Let him who takes pride, take pride in the Lord.'[13]

What is hidden from them who seek to establish their own justice,[14] what they do not know, is this justice of God, which grace gives without respect to merits. That is why they do

11 Cf. Ps. 30.20.
12 1 John 4.18.
13 1 Cor. 1.30,31.
14 Cf. Rom. 10.3.

not bow to the justice of God or, what is the same, to Christ. It is in this justice that there is to be found the great multitude of God's sweetness, and it is because of this justice that the Psalmist sings: 'Taste and see that the Lord is sweet.'[15] It is a sweetness, indeed, which we taste in this pilgrimage without partaking to satiety. Rather, it is something for which we must hunger and thirst so that later we may have our fill, when we shall see Him as He is. Then will be fulfilled what is written: 'I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear.'[16] Thus does Christ perfect the great multitude of His sweetness for those who hope in Him.

Notice that, in the theory I am attacking, the sweetness which they think God hides from them that fear Him is the sweetness in virtue of which He will not condemn the wicked; and it is hidden merely that those who fear to be damned may live rightly and so that there may be those who will pray for those who sin. Now, if this were the case, how does God perfect sweetness for those who hope in Him, seeing that, according to this theory, it is by this sweetness that God is to forgive those who do not hope in Him?

The conclusion is that the divine sweetness to be sought is that which God perfects for those who hope in Him, not that which these dreamers imagine He perfects for those who despise and blaspheme Him. The truth is that one seeks in vain, after the death of the body, for something that one neglected to seek while he was still in the body.

So, too, with the text: 'For God has shut up all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all.'[17] The Apostle did not mean by these words that God is to damn no one. What he meant is made clear by the context. St. Paul was speaking about the Jews who would one day believe, and he was speaking to

15 Ps. 33.9.
16 Ps. 16.15.
17 Rom. 11.32.

Gentiles who already had faith, and to whom he addressed his Epistles. He says: 'For as you also at one time did not believe God, but now have obtained mercy by reason of their unbelief, so they too have not now believed by reason of the mercy shown you, that they too may obtain mercy.' He then added the words which have led our friends into the false hopes of self-deception: 'For God has shut up all in unbelief that he may have mercy on all.' But, what can this 'all' mean except all of those of whom the Apostle was speaking. It means: 'You and them, you Gentiles and those Jews' whom God 'has foreknown and predestined to become conformed to the image of his Son.'[18] It was all of these that He shut up in unbelief, so that, from the bitterness of unbelief, through confusion and repentance, they might be brought by conversion and faith to the sweetness of God's mercy and to cry out in the words of the psalm: 'O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden from them that fear thee but hast perfected for them that hope in thee'[19]—with the accent on *thee*; and so not for those who hoped in themselves. The meaning then is: mercy for all the vessels of His mercy, the 'all' being all those of the Gentiles and all of those of the Jews whom God predestined and called, justified, and glorified.[20] Not one of these is God to damn, but mercy is not for all men whatsoever.

Chapter 25

An answer must now be given to those who make no promise of escape from eternal fire either to the Devil and his angels or even to all men, but who pretend that at least

18 Rom. 8.29.
19 Ps. 30.20.
20 Rom. 8.30.

those who have been cleansed in the baptism of Christ and have partaken of His Body and Blood will be saved from eternal suffering, however wickedly they have lived, or into whatever heresy or impiety they may have fallen. The answer to such wishful thinkers is given in the words of St. Paul: 'Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are immorality, uncleanness, licentiousness, idolatry, witchcrafts, enmities, contentions, jealousies, anger, quarrels, heresies, envies, murders, drunkenness, carousings and suchlike. And concerning these I warn you, as I have warned you, that they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God.'[1] Now, this is the declaration of an Apostle; yet it is false if the classes of sinners mentioned are ever to possess the kingdom of God by being freed from the flames after some indefinitely long term of suffering. But the apostolic declaration is not false; therefore, such sinners will not attain the kingdom of heaven. And if they are never to possess the kingdom of God, they are to be retained in eternal punishment, for the simple reason that outside of the kingdom there is no middle place where a man can find himself free from pain.

This being so, we have to find the right interpretation of the words of the Lord Jesus: 'This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that if anyone eat of it he will not die. I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eat of this bread he shall live forever.'[2]

First, in regard to the heretics and schismatics whom I am answering. Their interpretation of this text is denied by the Catholics whom I am about to answer. These Catholics are the ones who do not promise liberation for all who have the sacraments of baptism and the Body of Christ, but do promise liberation to all Catholics in spite of the wickedness of their lives because these and these alone have eaten not merely

1 Gal. 5.19-21.
2 John 6.50,51.

the sacramental symbol, but the reality of the Body of Christ, by reason of their incorporation in His Body, in the Body of which the Apostle says: 'Because the bread is one, we though many are one body.'[3] And, therefore, the one who is properly said to eat the Body of Christ and to drink the Blood of Christ is he who is incorporated in the unity of His Body, as one of those members of Christ, of the sacrament of whose Body the faithful regularly partake when they communicate at the altar. Hence, heretics and schismatics who are separated from the unity of this Body can, indeed, receive the sacrament, but to no avail—in fact, to their harm—since the result is to increase the pain rather than to curtail the length of their punishment. The truth is that they are not in the bond of peace of which the sacrament is the outward sign.

To turn now to those who properly understand that no one can be said to eat the Body of Christ who is outside of the Body of Christ. They are wrong in promising eventual liberation from eternal fire to those who fall from the unity of Christ's Body into heresy or, still worse, into the superstitions of paganism. First, they have failed to notice what an effrontery it is and what a departure from sound doctrine to say that practically all of the founders of impious heresies, who left the Church to become heresiarchs, are better off as far as final salvation is concerned than those who were at no time Catholics but have fallen into the traps of the heretics. This, in fact, would be the case if it were true that the ex-Catholic heresiarchs are to be ultimately saved by reason of the fact that they were baptized in the Catholic Church and at one time received the sacrament of the Body of Christ in the true Body of Christ. But the fact is that it is worse to be a deserter from the faith and, by reason of desertion, an enemy of the faith than to be one who has never lost what he never had.

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3 1 Cor. 10.17.

Besides, the answer to people holding such a theory has been given by the Apostle. He uses the same words to them as to the others, for, after mentioning the works of the flesh, he says with equal truth in reference to heresy: 'They who do such things will not attain to the kingdom of God.'[4]

These words go for those, too, whose morals are utterly corrupt but who think they are safe because they persevere, in a way, in communion with the Catholic Church and so put their trust in the text: 'He who has persevered to the end will be saved.'[5] Such people, by the wickedness of their lives, abandon Christ, who is the very righteousness of life, and they do this by fornication or other forms of immoral filth perpetrated in the body, and which the Apostle could not bring himself to mention, or by indulging in the shameless dissoluteness of lust, or by any other such turpitude, concerning all of which the Apostle says: 'For they who do such things will not attain the kingdom of God.' Therefore, since it will be impossible for those who do such things to be in the kingdom of God, there is no alternative but to remain in everlasting punishment.

Those who continue in such sins to the end of life can in no sense be said to persevere in Christ to the end. The reason is that to persevere in Christ means to persevere in His faith, and this faith, as the Apostle defines it, is one that 'works through charity,'[6] and charity, as he says elsewhere, 'does no evil.'[7] Nor can such sinners be said to eat the Body of Christ, for the simple reason they are not to be counted among the members of Christ, because they cannot be both the 'members of Christ' and at the same time 'members of a harlot.'[8] Finally, we have the words of Christ: 'He who eats my flesh,

4 Gal. 5.21.
5 Matt. 10.22.
6 Gal. 5.6.
7 Rom. 13.10; cf. 1 Cor. 13.6.
8 1 Cor. 6.15.

and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him.'[9] Here He shows what is meant by eating Christ's Body and drinking His Blood, not merely in the outward sacramental sign, but in the reality and truth of remaining in Christ so that Christ may remain in him who eats and drinks sacramentally. Thus, in saying these words, Christ was saying in effect: 'Let no one who does not abide in me, and in whom I do not abide, dare to say or imagine that he is eating My Body or drinking My Blood.' The truth is that none can abide in Christ but the members of Christ; no one can be a member of Christ who makes himself a member of a harlot—unless by repentance he desists from the evil, and by reconciliation returns to the good.

Chapter 26

But, it will be insisted, Christians who are Catholics have Christ as a 'foundation,' from which they are not dislodged even though they have 'built upon this foundation . . . wood, hay and straw,' in the sense of a life however worthless and wicked. The argument is that there will be damage done since the wood and the rest must burn, but that, nevertheless, faith will avail to save them, however long they must wait, from the everlastingness of the fire that burns them.

Let the Apostle James be invoked to make this brief reply: 'If a man says he has faith, but does not have works, can the faith save him?'[1] But of whom, then, our friends will urge, of whom did St. Paul say: 'but himself will be saved, yet so as through fire'?[2] Of whom, indeed! We join them in the same question. Most certainly not of the man who has no

9 John 6.57.

1 James 2.14.
2 1 Cor. 3.15.

works—unless we want to start a quarrel between the statements of the two Apostles. This would be the case if we make one of them say: 'Even though a man's works are wicked, still his faith will save him through fire,' while the other says: 'If he does not have works, can faith save him?'

What follows is that we shall only find who can be saved through fire if we can first determine what it means to have Christ as a foundation. And the best way to do this is to note that in a building nothing comes before the foundation. From this it follows that the man who has Christ for a foundation is the man who has Christ in his heart in such a way that nothing comes before Him, nothing either earthly and temporal, nor anything even which is licit and allowed. But, even though a man may seem to have the faith of Christ, if he allows any such thing to come before Christ, then for him Christ is not the foundation, since something comes before Him. Still less does he have Christ for his foundation if he despises and sins against Christ's salutary law. This is plain proof that Christ does not come first but is put behind. For such a man, what comes first is the indulgence of his passions. By his deeds he defies Christ who commands him as a ruler or condescends to grant permissions. Thus, no Christian who has a harlot in his heart, and by this kind of union becomes one body with her, any longer has Christ as his foundation; whereas, if anyone loves his wife and loves her 'according to Christ,' he continues without any doubt to have Christ as his foundation.

Even when a man loves his wife 'according to the world,' with an exclusively carnal passion, with the diseased desires of pagans who do not know God, his marriage is legitimate, as St. Paul allows and even as Christ, through the Apostle, allows. Even such a man can have Christ for his foundation, so long as he does not allow anything in this love and pleasure to come before Christ. He may build wood and hay and

straw upon the foundation, but Christ remains the foundation and, for this reason, such a man will be saved 'through fire.' The pleasures of passionate love on earth are made legitimate by reason of the marriage union, yet they do not escape such burning flames of tribulation as widowhoods and other woes that take away all wedded bliss. Therefore, anyone who builds such superstructure out of straw will find himself with a perishable construction, one that will not last and one whose loss will bring him pain, the more such things once brought him joy and pleasure. Nevertheless, in virtue of the foundation, such a one, through this fire, will be saved; the reason is that, had such a man been faced in time of persecution by the choice, life with joy or death with Christ, he would have chosen Christ.

One man 'builds on this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones,' and he is pictured in the Apostle's words: 'He who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God.'[3] Another man builds 'wood and hay and straw,' and you see his picture in the words: 'Whereas he who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife.[4] . . . The work of each will be manifest, for the day of the Lord will declare it (the day, of course, of tribulation), since the day is to be revealed in fire.'[5] That 'fire' and 'tribulation' are one we can see from the text: 'The furnace trieth the potter's vessels, and the trial of affliction just men.'[6] The fire will assay the quality of everyone's work: if his work abides which he has built thereon (and it abides when a man has been 'concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please God'), he will receive reward (in compensation for his concern); if his work burns, he

3 1 Cor. 7.32.
4 1 Cor. 7.33.
5 1 Cor. 3.13.
6 Eccli. 27.6.

will lose his reward (since what he loved he cannot keep), but he himself will be saved (because no tribulation moved him from his place on that foundation), 'yet so as by fire.' This last expression means that without the pain of fire he cannot destroy what the pleasures of love had built. Here, then, so it seems to me, we have a fire in which neither of these men will finally be lost, a fire which will be a gain for the one, a loss for the other, and a test for both.

Now, this fire cannot be the fire that our Lord meant when He said to those on His left hand: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into everlasting fire.'[7] We cannot suppose that among those who depart into this eternal fire are those who build 'on the foundation, wood, hay, and straw' and whom, later after some period of punishment in that fire imposed for their evil deeds, the merit of the good foundation will deliver. For, were this so, we should have to ask who those on His right hand were, to whom He will say: 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you';[8] and who could we say they were save those who built on the foundation, gold, silver, precious stones? But, if the fire mentioned in the text, 'yet so as through fire,' is to be understood as the 'everlasting fire,' both those on the right and the left are to be cast into this fire. Certainly, both are to be tried in that fire of which it is said: 'For the day will declare it, since the day is to be revealed in fire. The fire will assay the quality of every one's work.' Now, if fire is to test both in such a way that the one whose work remains unconsumed by fire will receive a reward, and the one whose work burns is to suffer loss, then this fire certainly is not the 'everlasting fire' mentioned by our Lord.

The fact is that into this 'everlasting fire' only those on His left hand are to be cast in that last and unchanging

7 Matt. 25.41.
8 Matt. 25.34.

damnation, whereas the 'fire that assays' lists those also who are on His right hand. But, of those on the right hand, one group is tested in such way that the superstructure built by them on Christ, their foundation, is not burnt and consumed, whereas the other group comes out differently from the test, with the result that their superstructure burns and they then suffer the consequent loss, although they themselves are saved, because, obedient to the primacy of charity, they held on to Christ whom they had chosen for their firm foundation. They will be saved and, therefore, they will certainly be standing on His right hand and with the others who are there they will hear the words: 'Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you.' They will not be on the left hand along with those who are not to be saved and who, therefore, are to hear the words: 'Depart from me, accursed ones, into everlasting fire.' And, of course, from the eternal fire no one will be saved, for into this unending doom all these depart and they will be 'where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched,'[9] where 'they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.'[10]

In this connection there is a hypothesis which I do not reject because it may be founded in fact. It is certain that there is an interval between the death of the body and the last day set for damnation and remuneration after the resurrection of all bodies. In this interval of time the spirits of the dead may be supposed to suffer some kind of fire. This will not be felt by those who in their lives and loves on earth built no such structure of wood, hay, and straw as calls for burning, whereas those others who carry beyond the grave the burden of such superstructure will feel the fire. They may feel it only after death, or both then and here on earth, or only during life. It is a fire of transitory tribulation that burns

9 Cf. Mark 9.45.
10 Apoc. 20.10.

away the venial worldliness that can be let off from everlasting punishment.

It is possible that one portion of that tribulation is bodily death, the offspring of man's first sin, and that this death continues to be felt by each according to the measure of the building that must be burned. So, too, with persecutions, whether those in which the martyrs die or those which every Christian feels. These, like fire, put our buildings to the test. Sometimes, when the superstructure is not built on Christ as the foundation, both the builders and the buildings perish. At other times, when Christ is the foundation, only the superstructure goes up in fire, while the builders, for all the loss, are saved. Sometimes, the superstructures remain untouched, for the testing persecutions find them the kind that can endure forever.

Another tribulation, worse than all that went before, is that which is to befall at the end of the world, in the time of Antichrist. Many will be the superstructures then, some of gold and some of straw, but both kinds built upon the best of all foundations, Jesus Christ. That fire of tribulation will test them both. For some it will mean joy, and for others loss. But, whether the test finds gold or straw, it will not destroy the builders because of the firm foundation on which they built.

But, what of the man who puts his human loves above the love of Christ? I do not merely mean the man who loves his wife as a minister to her carnal pleasure. I mean, too, the men whose loves, though free from such indulgences, are so purely human that they are preferred to the love of Christ. Such a man lacks this foundation and, therefore, he will not be saved 'yet so as through fire.' He will not be saved at all, because he has no way to become one with the Saviour who has told us so clearly in this connection: 'He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and

he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.'[11]

On the other hand, there is the man who loves his human relations with the fullest human affection, yet who keeps the first place in his heart for Christ, the man who would choose to give up all his friends rather than to lose Christ, if he were faced with such hard choice in some great crisis. This man will be saved through fire, because it burns like fire to lose one's friends, and the grief is greater as the love was strong.

Finally, there is the love of the man who has loved his father and his mother, his sons and daughters as Christ would have them loved, loving them in a way that leads them to the kingdom of Christ's faith and love, or loving them because they are already one with Christ, members of His Body. Love like this has Christ for its foundation and builds no superstructure of perishable wood and hay and straw; it builds with lasting silver, gold, and precious stones. For, how can one love more than Christ those who are loved on account of Christ?

Chapter 27

There are, finally, those who say that the only sinners who are destined to eternal flames are those who fail to compensate for sin by compassion for the poor. They base their view on a phrase of St. James: 'For judgment is without mercy to him who has not shown mercy.'[1] From this text they conclude that any man who has shown mercy—even though he filled his life with lawlessness and sin, and left his wicked ways unmended—will find the judgment to come so tempered by mercy that either no penalty at all will be imposed

11 Matt. 10.37.

1 James 2.13.

or, at most, there will be a temporary punishment followed by ultimate salvation. The single criterion, so they think, that Christ will use when He comes to separate those on His right hand who are destined for His kingdom from those on His left who are doomed to everlasting pain will be this: Did this man give or did he not give alms? Those who hold this view appeal to the Lord's Prayer as a witness and a proof that daily sins, however great, numerous, and continuous, can be remitted by daily alms-giving. Just as surely as no day passes, so they argue, without the recital of this prayer, so is there no daily sin of any sort which is not forthwith forgiven so soon as we say: 'Forgive us debts as we forgive our debtors'—provided, of course, that we do forgive these debtors. The Lord did not say, so they argue: 'If you forgive men their sins, your Father will forgive your daily venial sins,' but 'He will forgive your sins.' Therefore, however heinous and however many the sins which are committed day after day, and however lacking is any reformation of life even at the moment of death, so long, these men presume, as they themselves do not withhold the alms of forgiveness, their own sins can be forgiven.

In reply to this position, notice, first, that they admit that the alms to be given must be in some fitting proportion to the sins. For, of course, were they to pretend that any kind of alms could obtain divine pardon for great and daily repeated sins, no matter how inveterate the habit of wrong-doing, and that daily pardon would infallibly follow daily falls, they would realize the ludicrous absurdity of their position. For, they would be forced to admit the possibility of a millionaire handing out a few dimes a day in alms as a price for the remission of his murders, adulteries, and other more unmentionable sins. This is obviously absurd to the point of insanity. Hence, it is imperative to ask: What alms are in fitting proportion to the pardon for sins? After all, Christ's precursor

used the expression: 'Bring forth therefore fruit befitting repentance.' Now, once that question is asked, those sinners, at least, are undoubtedly excluded who continue to the hour of death in the daily perpetration of great sins. One reason is that such men increase the range of their robberies to cover the tiny alms they dispense to the poor, and they imagine that in giving food to Christ they have bought from Him, or rather buy each day, a permission to perpetrate their crimes, and so, they think, they can continue to commit their sins, however great, with impunity.

But the fact is that if, in compensation for one single sin, they distribute all they have to the poor members of Christ, it is utterly unavailing, unless they cease their sin and return to the possession of that charity which 'thinks no evil.'[2] Anyone, then, who gives alms in any proportion befitting his sins will begin with charity to himself. One has only to remember what our Lord says, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,'[3] to realize how improper it is for one who gives alms to his neighbor not to take pity on himself. There is another reminder in the words: 'Have pity on thy own soul, pleasing God.'[4] How can anyone be said to give fitting alms in compensation for his sins, if he does not give his own soul the alms of making it pleasing to God? In the same sense is the lesson of the text: 'He that is evil to himself, to whom will he be good?'[5] And, of course, prayers are meant to eke out alms. Hence the importance of heeding the words: 'My son, hast thou sinned? Do so no more: but for thy former sins also pray that they may be forgiven thee.'[6] The very purpose then of alms-giving is that, when we pray for pardon of our sins, we may be heard. The purpose is not that, when we

2 Cf. 1 Cor. 13.4.
3 Matt. 22.39.
4 Eccli. 30.24.
5 Eccli. 14.5.
6 Eccli. 21.1.

continue in our sins, we may have the illusion that by our alms we pay the price for a permission to do evil.

What, therefore, the Lord had in mind when He foretold that He would praise those on His right hand for their alms and blame those on His left for their neglect of alms-giving was to reveal the value of mercy in cancelling former sins, not their value in encouraging a sense of irresponsibility in perpetuating the habit of sin. No one, in fact, can properly be said to be giving alms, so long as he refuses to give up the habit of sin and to reform his life. When the Lord said: 'As long as you did not do it for one of those least ones, you did not do it for me,'[7] He made it clear that even when such givers of alms think they are giving alms they are, in fact, failing to do so. For, if they were really giving bread to a needy Christian in a Christian spirit, they could not refuse to give themselves the bread of holiness which is Christ Himself. What God looks for is not the condition of the one who receives the alms, but the spirit of the one who gives. Therefore, anyone who loves Christ in a fellow Christian gives his alms with the purpose of getting closer to Christ, not with the desire of playing the deserter from Christ with impunity. And, of course, the measure of malice in such desertion is the strength of the desire one has to do what Christ condemns.

This kind of purely outward alms-giving is like being baptized without being justified. We have to remember that He who said: 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,'[8] also declared: 'Unless your justice exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'[9] Why, we may well ask, does the first threat frighten so many into baptism, while the second fills so few with any worry about justification? Here, a contrast may help us. No one really

7 Matt. 25.45.
8 John 3.5.
9 Matt. 5.20.

calls his brother a 'fool'[10] so long as he uses the word out of anger only for his brother's sin (for if he were angered at the brother himself, he would be liable to the fire of Gehenna). On the contrary, no one really gives an alms to a fellow Christian unless he loves Christ in the Christian to whom the alms is handed; and, remember, no one loves Christ if he refuses to be justified in Christ. On the other hand, if a brother is really guilty in a quarrel of calling his brother, as a brother, a 'fool,' and without reference to removing his brother's sin, then in that case alms-giving is practically useless to forgive the sin of anger, unless along with the alms there is an effort to effect a reconciliation with his brother. The context makes this clear: 'Therefore, if thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has anything against thee, leave thy gift before the altar and go first to be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' This being so, it must be true in general that it is all but useless to give alms however great in compensation for sins however small if one makes no effort to break the habit of sin.

On the other hand, of course, it is no less true that the daily recital of the Lord's Prayer, the prayer which Jesus Himself has taught us, does remit many of our daily sins. We must, however, not merely say day by day: 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,' but we must forgive in fact, and not merely in pious phrasing. We must remember, too, that the prayer is said because we have sinned—not with the intention to sin because we have said the prayer. What our Lord wanted to make clear was that, however devoutly we try to live in the mists and miseries of this life, there will always be some falls for which we shall need to pray for pardon; and we shall always need to forgive those who trespass against us, with the prayer that we, too, may be

10 Matt. 5.22.

forgiven. The Lord had a clear purpose when He said: 'If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you your offenses.'[11] He certainly did not intend us to rely on this prayer for immunity when we commit daily sins of violence in reckless disregard for the laws of society or sins of fraud by which we deceive our neighbors. What He wanted us to learn from the prayer is that, even when we are innocent of such public crimes, we must not imagine that we are guiltless of all sin. There was a similar intention in the sacrifices of the Old Law which were to be offered, as God reminded the priests, first, for their own sins, and then for the sins of the people.

We must, in fact, examine with great care the exact words of our Lord to determine what He is teaching us. He does not say: 'If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you your offenses, however sinful they may be.' He merely says: 'Your offenses.' Notice that He was teaching a prayer that was to be recited every day, and that He was talking to His disciples who were already living in grace. What, then, can 'your offenses' mean, if not 'the kind of sins from which even you who live in grace and holiness are not likely to be free'? What ground, therefore, do those people have who pretend to find in this prayer an excuse for committing really serious sins every day? They persuade themselves that, because the Lord did not say 'small offenses,' but merely 'your offenses,' He must have meant to include really serious offenses. They conveniently forget that He was speaking to His holy Apostles and, therefore, that we must take 'your offenses' to mean 'small sins,' since the sins of the Apostles were at that time not great sins.

In any case, the 'serious offenses' which they imagine pardoned by the prayer cannot, in fact, be pardoned unless the condition is fulfilled: 'as we forgive our debtors'; besides,

11 Matt. 6.14.

such sins must be utterly renounced by an effective purpose of amendment. If it is true that not even the venial sins which are unavoidable in the lives of holy people are forgiven unless there is forgiveness given to others, really great sinners, who have much on their conscience even after they have broken the habit of sin, obviously can expect no pardon until they are prepared to forgive every offense committed against themselves. This is quite certain from what the Lord tells us: 'If you do not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offenses.'[12] This is also clear from what St. James says: 'For judgment is without mercy to him who has not shown mercy.'[13] One should recall, too, the servant whose debt of 10,000 talents was first forgiven by his lord, and then later demanded because the servant had no mercy on a fellow servant who owed him one hundred *denarii*.[14]

It is clear, therefore, that where there is a question of the 'sons of the promise' and of 'vessels of mercy' there comes into play the grace mentioned by St. James after he had spoken of mercy and judgment. He says: 'Mercy triumphs over judgment.' The point here is that even the just men who lived in such great holiness that they could receive into the tabernacles of eternity others who paid for friendship 'with the mammon of wickedness,'[15] even these just men became holy only by the merciful deliverance of Him who gives grace to the wicked, not as a reward that is deserved but out of pure bounty.[16] And in the number of these, of course, is the Apostle who wrote of himself 'as one having obtained mercy from the Lord, to be trustworthy.'[17]

Contrasted with these are those others who are received

12 Matt. 6.15.
13 James 2.13.
14 Matt. 18.23-35.
15 Luke 15.9.
16 . . . *qui iustificat impium, imputans mercedem secundum gratiam, non secundum debitum.*
17 1 Cor. 7.25.

into the eternal tabernacles by the just. It must be confessed that, as far as their moral living goes, it was not good enough to lead to liberation apart from the intercession of the saints. That is why, in their case, there is a still more notable triumph of mercy over judgment. Yet, there are limits to this mercy. We must not imagine that any thoroughgoing scoundrel who remains utterly unreformed is likely to be received into the everlasting tabernacles on account of helping the saints by the mammon of iniquity in the sense of ill-gotten money or property. This holds also in cases where the riches have been legitimately obtained but are riches in the purely material sense because the owner has no sense whatever of those true riches of the spirit which fill the heart of holy men who are privileged to receive others into the tabernacles of eternity.

Hence, we should distinguish three levels of living. One kind of life is so evil that those who lead it can be helped into the kingdom of heaven by no amount of alms-giving, however generously distributed to God's poor, and however calculated to make friends likely to receive them into the eternal tabernacles. Another is a life good enough to make possible the obtaining of beatitude. Between these is the third or middle kind of life which stands in need of the merits of those whom they have befriended by their alms, in order that mercy may be obtained.

In this connection, I must recall a remarkable passage in Virgil which always reminds me of two expressions of our Lord. The first of these is: 'Make friends for yourselves of the mammon of wickedness, so that when you fail they may receive you into the everlasting dwellings.'[18] The second is very similar: 'He who receives a prophet, because he is a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he who receives a just man, shall receive a just man's reward.'[19] Now, Virgil has a

18 Luke 16.9.
19 Matt. 10.41.

description of the Elysian fields (where pagans fancy that the souls of the blessed abide) in which he pictures not merely those who were able to reach that realm in virtue of their own good deeds, but also 'men who made good friends who did not then forget them,'[20] men, that is, who not merely made friends for themselves but whose services were rewarded because their friends did not forget these services. All this reminds one of what happens when a simple Christian commends himself to one of the saints. He prays: 'Be mindful of me,' and then does some service in order to help the saint not to forget him.

There is, then, such a middle mode of living, too sinful of itself to prepare a way to the kingdom of God, yet too full of services to the saints not to win their friendship and their grateful intercession for God's indulgence. Nevertheless, it is very very difficult and even dangerous to define just what services make up for just what sins. At any rate, I confess, so far, my failure, although I have tried hard enough to reach a definition. It may be that God keeps these things hidden lest any one grow lazy in his efforts to avoid all sins whatsoever. For, if men knew for just what habits of sin, unchecked and unreformed, they could count on the intercession of the saints, their human sloth would bog them down, and virtue would lose its zeal to rescue them from this marsh of immorality, and they would lazily look to others' efforts, to those friends whom they had made by using the mammon of wickedness as a means to help God's poor. On the contrary, as things now are, with no one knowing just what measure of unreformed immorality is compatible with God's mercy, there is more zeal for prayer and importunate supplication to win some progress in the way of virtue and there is less

20 *Aeneid* 6.664.

danger of despising the making of friends among the holy poor who can be helped by the mammon of iniquity.

Be this as it may, this much we know, that whatever emancipation is wrought by one's own prayer or by the intercession of holy souls is not an escape out of everlasting fire in which one has already been for some time immersed, but simply freedom from falling into the flames at all. For, even those who argue that the passage about good ground yielding thirty-fold or sixty-fold or a hundred-fold[21] take this to mean that the saints, according to their variety of spiritual fertility, will yield freedom for thirty or sixty or a hundred souls on the day of judgment itself, not at some later period. Even in this view men can too easily promise themselves impunity on the ground that it seems to open a way to universal liberation. That is why a wit once remarked that it is better, by leading a good life, to be sure to be among those who do the praying for other people's liberation. It is just possible, he said, that the number of saints may be so small that, once their thirties and sixties and hundreds have been exhausted, there may be a great many left over with no chance of liberation. And, of course, among them might be the people who had promised themselves, rather rashly, that they would be the fruit of other people's prayers.

In all I have been saying, I have had in mind people who read the Scriptures as we do, accept their authority, but who fail to understand them and, therefore, imagine that the judgment to come will be nearer to their hearts' desire than to what the Scriptures tell us. In the hope that I have answered all the difficulties they have raised, I bring this Book to an end, as I said I would.

21 Matt. 13.8.

BOOK TWENTY-TWO

Chapter 1

AS I MENTIONED in the preceding Book, the present one is to be the last of the whole work, and is to deal with the eternal blessedness of the City of God. The word 'eternal' as here used means more than any period, however long, of centuries upon centuries which, ultimately, must have an end. It means 'everlasting' in the sense of the text which runs: 'Of his kingdom there shall be no end.'[1] It does not mean the kind of apparent perpetuity produced by successive generations which come and go by births and deaths. Such a perpetuity is merely perennial like the color of an evergreen that seems to continue forever because the new leaves, sprouting while the old ones wither and fall, maintain an unchanging density of foliage. On the contrary, in the eternal City of God, each and all of the citizens are personally immortal with an immortality which the holy angels never lost and which even human beings can come to share. This is to be achieved by the supreme omnipotence

1 Luke 1.33.

of the Creator, the Founder of the City. It is a realization which God, who cannot but keep His word, has promised, and He has given abundant pledges of its fulfillment in the promises which He has already kept and in the uncovenanted blessings which He has already bestowed.

For, it was this same God who, in the beginning, created the universe and filled it with all those things that the eye can see and all those realities which the mind can know. Of all such creations the highest were the spirits to whom He gave the gift of intelligence and the power to behold God and to be filled with His beatitude. These He has linked by a common bond of love in a single society which we call the holy and heavenly City. In this community, God is the life by which the spirits live. He is the food on which their blessedness is fed. God gave these spirits the gift of freedom, but it was a power of choice so rooted in their nature, as intelligence is, that, once they used their power to fall away from God, the Source of all their joy, misery was bound to follow. Although God foresaw that some of these free angels would try to lift themselves up to a level where they might find their happiness in themselves alone and so abandon God, their only good, God did not take away their freedom. He judged it better and more in accord with His power to bring some greater good even out of evil than to permit no evil whatsoever.

Now, what makes such evil possible is the fact that no created nature can be immutable. Every such nature is made, indeed, by God, the supreme and immutable Good who made all things good, but, by choosing to sin, such a nature brings evil upon itself. This very sinning, however, bears witness to the fact that the nature in itself, as it comes from the hand of God, is good. For, unless the nature in itself were a really great good—though, of course, not good in the measure that the Creator is good—then the falling away from God into

the creature's own darkness could not be a misfortune for the nature. Sin is to a nature what blindness is to an eye. The blindness is an evil or defect which is a witness to the fact that the eye was created to see the light and, hence, the very lack of sight is the proof that the eye was meant, more than any other member of the body, to be the one particularly capable of seeing the light. Were it not for this capacity, there would be no reason to think of blindness as a misfortune. So is it with that nature that basked in God as an eye does in light. The very sin which deprived this nature of happiness in God and left it miserable is the best proof of how good that nature was, as it came from the hand of God.

In the case of the deliberate falling away of some of the angels, God most justly imposed the punishment of an everlasting unhappiness. The other angels remained in union with God, their supreme Good, and to these God gave, as a kind of reward for their remaining, the certain assurance that this remaining would be without end.

As for human nature, God made it likewise unfallen, but free to fall away. Man was an animal made out of earth, but not unfit for heaven, if only he would remain close to his Creator. But, as with the angels, if human nature should choose to fall away from God, misery proportionate to the offense was bound to follow. Here, too, God foresaw the fall, the disregard of His law, the desertion from Good, yet He left man's free choice unchecked because He also foresaw to what good He would turn man's evil. And, in fact, out of this mortal race of men, justly doomed by their own deserts, God gathers, by His grace, so numerous a people that out of them He fills the places and restores the ranks emptied by the fallen angels. Thus is it that the beloved City, which is above, is not deprived of the full complement of its citizens and, in fact, may even rejoice in a fuller complement than it had before the angels' fall.

Chapter 2

It is true that much that is done by wicked men runs counter to the will of God. Yet, His wisdom and power are such that whatever appears to oppose Him is turned to some good end or purpose which He foresaw to be good and holy. Thus, even though we speak of God changing His mind, of His becoming angry, for example, after being kind to certain people, it is, in reality, these people, not God, who change. They find God changed because *they* have undergone a change, much as the sunlight seems to change from soft to sharp or from pleasant to painful to the eyes that have been hurt, although, in fact, the light remains precisely as it was before.

So, too, when St. Paul says: 'It is God who works in you the will'[1] (meaning that God makes a change in the hearts of those who obey His commands), this change is called God's will. So, too, God's justice means both the justice by which He is just and that by which we are made just by Him; and His law means both the law which He imposes and that which men make. Thus, while one text reads: 'In your Law it is written,'[2] another runs: 'The law of his God is in his heart.'[3] Certainly, Jesus was speaking to men when He said 'your Law.' The fact is that God is said to 'will' with the will He 'works' in men, not because He himself is then 'willing,' but because He makes His creatures will to do His will. He is said to 'know' something when, in fact, He merely brings it about that those who were in ignorance come to know this fact or that fact. Take the words: 'But now that you have come to know God, or rather be known by

1 Phil. 2.13
2 John 8.17.
3 Ps. 36.31.

God.'[4] It would be disturbing to imagine that the Apostle's words mean that God came to know, in time, those whom He had foreknown before the creation of the world. Actually, He is said to come to know in time, only because it is in time that He makes Himself known. (I have discussed such forms of speech earlier in this work.[5])

There is even a sense in which God can be said to 'will' many things which He does not accomplish. In such cases, His 'will' means the willingness He brings about in others who are ignorant of the future. Thus, His saints, with a holy will inspired by God, long for many things to happen which never happen. They pray, for example, for purposes which are good and holy, yet, although God, through His Holy Spirit, has inspired this will to pray, He does not grant what is prayed for. This is the case when the saints pray—and this desire is as God wants them to desire—that all men may be saved. Here we can say: 'God wills, yet does not accomplish what He wills.' He wills only in the sense that He inspires the saints to have this will. Actually, God has already accomplished everything that He has willed in heaven and earth, past, present, and future, if we take His 'will' to mean that will which, like His eternal foreknowledge, is eternal. Nevertheless, before the time comes at which, as God willed, what He foresaw and preordained from all eternity should be accomplished, we can say: 'It will take place when God wills.' And if we know neither the time at which something is to happen nor even whether it is to happen at all, we can say only: 'It will take place, if God wills.' This does not mean that God will have some new purpose at that time which He did not have before. It merely means that what was arranged from all eternity in God's unchanging will is said to be realized, as a matter of fact, at that particular time.

4 Gal. 4.9.
5 Cf. above, 11.8; 14.11; 15.25; 16.6.

Chapter 3

This helps us to realize that, just as God's promise made to Abraham is already visibly fulfilled in Christ, so other promises made to the seed of Abraham will be no less certainly fulfilled. The promise to Abraham was: 'In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.'[1] It is one of many such promises. Some of the prophecies concerning Abraham's seed run: 'The dead shall rise again. . . . There shall be a new heaven and a new earth, and the former things shall not be in remembrance, and they shall not come upon the earth, but they shall be glad and rejoice forever in these things. For behold I shall make Jerusalem a rejoicing and my people joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall no more be heard in her.'[2] Then there are the promises made to and through another Prophet: 'At that time shall thy people be saved, every one that shall be found written in the book. And every one of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awaken: some unto life everlasting and others unto reproach and everlasting confusion. . . . But the saints of the most high God shall take the kingdom and they shall possess the kingdom forever and ever . . . whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.'[3]

I mentioned other promises relative to eternal life in Book XX.[4] All these, along with many others mentioned in Holy Writ will be fulfilled just as so much else which the unbelievers doubted has already been fulfilled. For, of course, it is the same God who made both sets of promises and who foretold that all would come to pass—the God whom the demons of the pagans so much fear, as that eminent pagan philosopher, Porphyry, has admitted.[5]

1 Gen. 22.18.
2 Cf. Isa. 26.19; 65.17-19.
3 Cf. Dan. 12.1,2; 7.18,27.
4 Cf. above, 20.21-29.
5 Cf. above, 19.23.

Chapter 4

The authority of these Scriptural promises has been greatly increased by the fact that men and women of every sort have been converted, as our Scriptures so long ago foretold they would be converted, to faith and hope in these supernal things. Yet, in face of this, there are scientists and philosophers who argue, not without some show of sharpness, that the resurrection of men's bodies is impossible. One of their arguments is taken from a passage in the third book of Cicero's *De re publica,*[1] dealing with the apotheosis of men like Hercules and Romulus. It runs: 'It was not the bodies of these men that were taken up to heaven. For, it would be quite against nature for anything that sprang from earth to have a permanent abode elsewhere than in the earth.' Surely, a great bit of philosophic cogency, this, worthy of the reproach: 'The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men, that they are vain.'[2]

Just turn that argument the other way. Suppose we were nothing but souls, that is, spirits without bodies, dwelling in heaven, and with no knowledge of animals on earth, and suppose some one told us that we were to be joined in some miraculous way with earthly bodies in order to give them life. Would we not have a better right to disbelieve that anything of the sort was possible and a stronger argument if we said: 'It would be quite against nature for anything incorporeal to be bound by corporeal ligaments?'

But the fact of the matter is that the earth is teeming with souls that are giving life to earthly bodies which are bound and made one in the same marvelous way with their principles of life. Now, it is God who made every such living thing on earth. What difficulty, therefore, can there be in this same God willing and being able to lift an earthly body

1 3.28.
2 Ps. 93.11.

to become a heavenly body if He can take a soul (which is more precious than any body and, therefore, than even a heavenly body) and put it in a union with an earthly body. If a tiny particle of earth can hold in union with itself something better than a heavenly body, and get thereby its life and feeling, why should heaven disdain to receive this living and sentient thing or be unable to sustain it once it is there —remembering always that the principle of this life and feeling is something higher than any heavenly body?

The only real reason why this does not yet happen is simply because the time has not yet come for it to happen in accordance with His will who brought about the miracle of vegetable life, which seems so ordinary merely because we have it before our eyes, but which, in fact, is far more marvelous than what these pagans persist in disbelieving. Surely, by any logic, we ought to be more deeply moved by the marvel of immaterial souls (as superior to any heavenly body) being brought into union with earthly bodies than by the lesser wonder of lowly earthly bodies being lifted to abodes which, for all their heavenly situation, are still corporeal. It is merely the fact that we are constant witnesses of the greater marvel and, in fact, its living illustrations, that we think so lightly of it. And it is only because we are not yet, nor have not yet seen, celestial bodies that they seem so incredible. For, certainly, in the light of sober thinking, it is a more marvelously divine operation to make a union out of bodies and souls than to join bodies, whatever their difference of heavenly and earthly origin.

Chapter 5

Even if we should grant that the resurrection of the body was once beyond belief, the fact is that the whole world now

believes that the earthly body of Christ has been taken up to heaven. Learned and unlearned alike no longer doubt the resurrection of His flesh and His ascension into heaven, while there is but a handful of those who continue to be puzzled. Now, what all these believers believed was either credible or it was not. If it was credible, then the incredulous should ask themselves whether they are not rather ridiculous. If it was not credible and yet was believed, then we have something really incredible, namely that something incredible should be so universally believed. We have then two incredibles: one, the resurrection of any body in eternal life; the other, the world's belief in this incredibility. But notice. The same God predicted both before the event. Now, one of these incredibilities has become a fact before our very eyes, namely, the incredibility of the world believing something incredible. Why, then, should we doubt that the other will be fulfilled, namely, that the incredible truth which the world believed will come to pass as surely as the others agree incredibility has already come to pass, namely, the incredibility of the world believing as incredible a thing—particularly since the same Scriptures which led the world to believe predicted both the impossibilities, both the one we see realized and the other we know by faith?

What is really hard to believe, for any one who stops to think, is the way the world came to believe. The fishermen whom Christ sent with the nets of faith into the sea of the world were men unschooled in the liberal arts and utterly untrained as far as education goes, men with no skill in the use of language, armed with no weapons of debate, plumed with no rhetorical power. Yet, the catch this handful of fishermen took was enormous and marvelous. They hauled in fish of every sort, not excluding those rare specimens, the philosophers themselves. We may add, then, if you please, this third incredibility to the other two; in fact, it must be

added whether one likes it or not, simply because there are three incredibilities which actually occurred. It is incredible that Christ should have risen in His flesh and, with His flesh, have ascended into heaven; it is incredible that the world should have believed a thing so incredible; it is incredible that men so rude and lowly, so few and unaccomplished, should have convinced the world, including men of learning, of something so incredible and have convinced men so conclusively.

Of course, our friends, the skeptics, still shy at the first of these three incredibilities; but the second is a fact before their very eyes, which they are compelled to believe; and if they refuse to believe the third of the incredibilities, they have no explanation of a manifest fact.

It is no less a fact that the Resurrection of Christ and His Ascension into heaven, with the flesh in which He rose, is now preached to the whole world and is believed. If it cannot be believed, then why in the world does the whole world believe it? Of course, the world could believe without a miracle if a multitude of senators, imperial courtiers, and famous scholars had declared that they had seen the Ascension and then took pains to publicize the fact,[1] but the truth is that the world has believed a handful of unknown and unlearned nobodies who said and wrote that they had seen the miracle.

What the little coterie of skeptics must explain is why they still hold out so blatantly against a whole world of believers who have an explanation of their faith. The world has believed this insignificant group of lowly, unimportant, and uneducated men precisely because the divine character of what happened is more marvelously apparent in the insignificance of such witnesses. What gave power to the preachers who persuaded the world was not the eloquence of the words they uttered, but the miracles in the deeds they did.

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1 I omit the spurious insertion, *sed istos adhuc credere nolle perdurum est.*

Those who had not themselves seen Christ rising from the dead and ascending into heaven with His flesh believed the men who said they had seen the miracle, not merely because these men said so, but also because these men themselves worked miracles. For example, many people were astonished to hear these men, who knew but two languages (and, in some cases, only one) suddenly break forth into so many tongues that everybody in the audience understood. They saw a man who had been lame from earliest infancy now, after forty years, stand upright at a word uttered by these witnesses who spoke in the name of Christ. Pieces of cloth that touched their bodies were found to heal the sick. Uncounted people suffering from various diseases set themselves in line in the streets where the Apostles were to pass and where their shadows would fall upon the sick, and many of these people were at once be restored to health. Besides many other marvels wrought in the name of Christ, there were even cases of dead men restored to life.

Now, those who read such marvels either believe them or they do not. If they believe them, then we can add ever so many more incredibilities to the three already mentioned. To gain faith in the one miracle of the Resurrection and Ascension of the flesh into heaven, we literally heap up a mass of testimonies to a multitude of incredibilities. Yet, in spite of all this, we fail to bend to our belief the horrendous hardness of the skeptics' hearts. If, on the other hand, skeptics will not believe that these miracles were wrought through the Apostles precisely for the purpose of making it easier to believe their preaching of the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, we are still left with the one stupendous miracle, which is all we need: the miracle of the whole world believing, without benefit of miracles, the miracle of the Resurrection.

Chapter 6

This is the place to recall the astonishment which Cicero felt concerning the faith of the Romans in the divinity of Romulus. I shall cite Cicero's own words: 'The case of Romulus is particularly astonishing. Other men who have been divinized belonged to periods of imperfect culture when fancy was more fertile and when uncritical spirits were easily persuaded to believe, but, in the age of Romulus, less than 600 years before our own, literature and learning were already flourishing and the primitive superstitions of untutored men had long since been abolished.'[1] And, a little later, on the same theme, Cicero adds other words to the same effect: 'Romulus, then, lived in a period of general culture so much later than the age of Homer, and so full of men of learning, that there was hardly any place for uncritical fancy. A primitive age, of course, enjoys fables even of the crudest sort, but an age like that of Romulus was too critical to accept anything incredible.'

Here, then, we have a man like Marcus Tullius Cicero, eminent as a scholar and supreme as a writer, amazed that anyone should have believed in the divinity of Romulus in an age too critical to accept unfounded fables. And, of course, outside of Rome, which was then small and in its infancy, no one believed that Romulus was a god. As for the succeeding generations, they felt obliged to keep the tradition they received. The result was that, as the city grew into a great empire, the superstition was imbibed by the Romans with their mothers' milk, and the Romans from the height of their prestige poured it forth upon their conquered subjects. These peoples did not really believe that Romulus was a god,

1 *De re publica* 2.10. Note that the 600 years does not mean 600 years before Cicero (106-43 B.C.), but before Scipio Aemilianus (185-129 B.C.), who is the main speaker in *De re publica*.

yet they did not dare to defy the city they obeyed by refusing to declare that the founder was divine. The best that can be said for the Romans themselves is that they believed this fable, not so much out of any love of aberration as out of an aberration of love.

It is different with Christ, the Founder of the heavenly and everlasting City. This City does not believe Christ to be God because it was founded by Him but, on the contrary, the City came to be founded because people believed He was God. Rome had already been built and dedicated when it worshiped its founder in his temple as a god, whereas this 'Jerusalem' offered its faith in Christ, its Founder, as God, in the hope that, on this Foundation, the City might be built and consecrated. Rome believed that Romulus was a god because it loved him; Jerusalem loved its Founder, Christ, because it believed that He was God. This much is true, that, as our City had good ground for faith, so Rome had some ground for love; but, whereas this love led to a false faith in a beloved founder, our true faith led, by wise ways, to a love of a truly divine Founder.

There were many grounds for our faith. Not to mention a multitude of miracles that proved that Christ was God, we had the divinely inspired and utterly authentic prophecies which our fathers believed even before they were fulfilled in Christ and which, after this fulfillment, are completely cogent. But the most that can be said of Romulus as the founder and ruler of Rome is what subsequent tradition tells or history relates. There is no question here of antecedent prophecy. And, as for the apotheosis, this is recorded merely as a matter of faith, not as a fact. There are no marvels that might serve as signs to prove that Romulus was really accepted as a god. Can anyone really take the tale of the she-wolf that suckled him as a portent of the kind and magnitude that is needed to prove divinity? Is it really certain

that the wolf was a wild animal and not an unmarried mother? In any case, she suckled both twins, and no one reckons Remus as a god. And has anyone ever chosen death rather than to deny, when commanded to deny, that Romulus and Hercules and the rest were gods? And has any people in the world, apart from fear of Roman power, ever offered divine worship to Romulus?

Contrast this with the case of Christ. An uncounted multitude of martyrs, under duress of the most savage torture, have chosen death rather than to deny that Christ is God. Think, too, of how slight a fear of even possible Roman indignation and reprisal has compelled some cities under Roman sway to worship Romulus as a god, and then contrast with this how little the fear even of Rome's whole repertoire of tortures, up to and including death, the worst of all, has moved the multitude of martyrs. They have not merely refused to give up worshiping Christ, but they have defiantly preached Him openly to every people in the world. And, note, too, that though the City of Christ, still pilgrimaging on earth, has a population big enough to make up many battalions, it has never taken up arms against its persecutors for any merely temporal gain. On the contrary, for the sake of its eternal salvation, it has repudiated military self-defense. Christians have been chained and put in prison, scourged and tortured, burned and torn to pieces, killed in countless ways—but their number continued to increase. Their idea of going to war for worldly security is to prefer their Saviour to the saving of their skin.[2]

It is, if I remember rightly, in Book 3 of *De re publica* that Cicero argues that no good society should ever go to war unless it be in defense of fidelity or of safety. He explains elsewhere the kind of safety that ought to be defended. 'It is,' he says, 'common enough for individuals, in the face

2 *Non erat eis pro salute pugnare nisi salutem pro Salvatore contemnere.*

of penalties such as spoliation or exile, imprisonment or torture, to prefer immediate death; but for a political community to die is not an escape, as it might seem to be in the case of an individual; to die is, in fact, the worst of punishments. The whole point of an institution like the state is to prolong its life unendingly. Hence, for no political society can death ever be natural, as it might be for one of its citizens for whom death is not merely inevitable, but, at times, desirable. When, in fact, a great city comes to perish by destruction and annihilation, it is, if I may make the comparison, as though the whole world came to an end in complete collapse.'[3] For Cicero to make such a comparison is all the more startling since, as a good Platonist, he thought that this world could never end. What he meant, then, by the safety which justifies a war was the unending permanence of a political community, the guarantee that, though the citizens individually might come and go by birth and death, the community would go on forever—like the perennial foliage of the olive, the laurel, and other evergreens that last so long because the leaves that fall are continually replaced by others. Safety, for Cicero, means security from that civic death which is a punishment for a state in a way that personal death can never be a punishment for a single citizen, who, often enough, prefers death to other penalties.

Hence, there is a problem of deciding whether the people of Saguntum were right when they sacrificed 'safety' to 'fidelity,' when they chose to see their city perish utterly rather than break their pact of loyalty to the Roman Republic. Actually, their *beau geste* has brought them praise from all good citizens of the earthly city, though I do not see how it fits the Ciceronian theory. The theory gives two grounds for war: danger to loyalty and danger to the continuance of civic life. But, what if both dangers appear at the same time

3 *De re publica* 3.23.

and so make the single peril that, whichever is saved, the other must be lost? Which, then, must be preferred? For, of course, if the people of Saguntum had preferred to live, they would have had to betray their loyalty; and if they chose fidelity, as they did, they had to lose their civic life.

How different is the safety in the case of the City of God! It is salvation and not merely safety. Safety can be maintained, or, rather, achieved along with faith and by means of faith.[4] But, once faith is lost, there is no road to return to this City's life. It was this reflection that gave to the hearts of so many martyrs a firmness to resist and a patience to endure, the like of which appears nowhere in the whole history of devotion to the divinity of Romulus.

Chapter 7

But enough of this pseudo-divinity. It is, in fact, rather ridiculous even to mention Romulus in the same breath with Christ. However, one point is interesting. If it is true that, as far back as 600 years before Cicero,[1] the age of Romulus was so advanced in culture that anything counter to verifiable facts would be rejected as fable, how much more so was this the case 600 years later, in the time of Cicero, and still more so under Augustus and Tiberius. In such a period of critical scholarship, how could possibilities so counter to experience as the Resurrection of Christ's flesh and His Ascension into heaven have found entrance into men's ears and hearts and minds, unless the possibility had been realized

4 In Latin, of course, *salus* means both 'safety' and 'salvation,' just as *fides* means both 'fidelity' and 'faith.' *Salus autem civitatis Dei talis est, ut cum fide ac per fidem teneri vel potius adquiri possit.*

1 Cf. above, 22.6 n. 1.

in fact and a proof had been found in the divinity of the fact involved, namely, the fact of the divinity, not to mention the corroboration of manifest miracles? The fact is that, in spite of the terrors and attacks inspired by a series of fierce persecutions, not only was the Resurrection of Christ loyally believed and fearlessly proclaimed, but also the resurrection and immortality of the bodies of His followers in the world to come. And the seeds of this hope scattered throughout the world were watered by the blood of martyrs. Not only did men read the earlier prophecies of these future realities, but they saw the miracles that occurred, and were soon convinced that the reality, new as it was in experience, was not counter to reason. The result was that the truth that the world once rejected with all the fury of hate it now sought with the fervor of faith.

Chapter 8

It is sometimes objected that the miracles, which Christians claim to have occurred, no longer happen. One answer might be that they are no longer needed as they once were to help an unbelieving world to believe. As things now are, any lone believer looking for a miracle to help him to believe, in the midst of a world in which practically everyone already believes, is surely himself a marvel of no mean magnitude. However, the malice of the objection is in the insinuation that not even the earlier miracles ought to be believed. It is an insinuation that leaves our friends with two facts unexplained: How do they explain that the Ascension of Christ into heaven has come to be everywhere proclaimed with so firm a faith; and how do they explain that our world, which is so advanced in culture and so critical in mentality, has come, without benefit of miracles, to believe so miraculously in realities so incredible? Perhaps they will say: 'Well,

the tales were not wholly incredible and so people came to believe them.' In that case, our friends have still to explain why they themselves have remained incredulous.

Perhaps it is better to meet such irresponsible skepticism in a summary dilemma which would run as follows: Either the world has founded its faith in an unseen and incredible occurrence on the fact that no less incredible occurrences not merely took place but were seen to take place; or else the original occurrence was so palpably credible that it needed no additional miracles to convince men's minds of its truth. In either case, our friends are left with no justification of their own wilful skepticism. It is simply undeniable that, as a fact, there have been any number of miracles attesting the one, sublime, and saving miracle of Christ's Ascension into heaven with the flesh in which He arose from the dead. The books which record these miracles are absolutely trustworthy and, what is more, they record not merely the attesting miracles but the ultimate object of our faith which the miracles were meant to confirm. The miracles were made known to help men's faith and, of course, they are now still better known on account of the faith which the world has embraced. The miracles are read to our people in our churches to nourish their faith, although the people would not be in the churches to hear them read unless the miracles were already believed.

The truth is that even today miracles are being wrought in the name of Christ, sometimes through His sacraments and sometimes through the intercession of the relics of His saints. Only, such miracles do not strike the imagination with the same flashing brilliance as the earlier miracles, and so they do not get the same flashing publicity as the others did. The fact that the canon of our Scriptures is definitively closed brings it about that the original miracles are everywhere repeated and are fixed in people's memory, whereas contem-

porary miracles which happen here or there seldom become known even to the whole of the local population in and around the place where they occur. Especially is this the case in the more populous cities, where relatively few learn the facts while most of the people remain uninformed. And when the news does spread from mouth to mouth, even in the case of Christians reporting to Christians, it is too unauthoritative to be received without some difficulty or doubt.

This, however, was not the case with a miracle that took place in Milan while I was there. A great many people managed to hear of a blind man whose sight was restored because the city is big and, besides, the Emperor was there at the time and an immense multitude of people was gathered to venerate the relics of the martyrs, Protasius and Gervasius, and so witnessed what took place. The relics had been hidden, and no one knew where they were until the hiding place was revealed in a dream to Bishop Ambrose, who thereupon went and found them. It was on that occasion that the long-enduring darkness dropped from the blind man's eyes and he saw the light of day.

On the other hand, only a handful of people have ever heard of a cure that occurred in Carthage when I was there and which I witnessed with my own eyes. It happened to Innocent, a former advocate in the office of deputy prefect, at the time when my fellow bishop, Alypius, and I (neither of us yet ordained, but both already dedicated to God) had just returned from Italy. Innocent, along with his whole household, was a remarkably devout Catholic and he welcomed us into his home. He was just then undergoing medical care in connection with a complicated case of multiple rectal fistula.[1] The doctors had already incised and were now following up with applied medications. The cutting had caused

1 For several technical medical expressions the translators are indebted to John Madigan, M.D., of Houlton, Maine.

very acute pains and these continued day after day, the trouble being that one of the sinuses that should have been opened was so recessed that it had escaped the scrutiny of the surgeons. Long after all the other sinuses were healed, this single one remained, and all efforts to relieve the patient's pain were unavailing.

Naturally, he became afraid that a second operation would be called for, particularly since his family doctor, who had not been allowed even to watch the original operation, had told Innocent that this would be the case. On that occasion, Innocent had become so annoyed that he dismissed the doctor from his service. His anxiety, however, continued. One day, in fact, he turned to his surgeons and burst out: 'Do you mean to cut me again? Don't tell me that the man you refused to admit to the operation was right after all!' The surgeons, however, merely scoffed at the family doctor's naivete and tried to calm their patient and, in their best bedside manner, made soothing promises.

But, as day after day dragged on, nothing came of all their medications. The surgeons kept saying that there was no need to operate and that all would respond to treatment. However, they called in for consultation Ammonius, a very old and famous practitioner, who has since died. He examined the patient's rectum and, on the basis of the other surgeons' technique and aftercare, gave the same prognosis as they. Innocent, for the moment, was so assured by the weight of this authority that he began to talk as though he were already cured. He even indulged in cheerful banter at the expense of the poor family doctor who had predicted that more cutting was to come.

Well, to make a long story short, so many days passed to no purpose that the worn-out and humbled surgeons confessed, at last, that nothing short of the scalpel would effect a cure. Poor Innocent turned pale with fear and nearly

fainted. As soon as he was sufficiently calm to talk, he told them to get out and never come back again. Worn out with weeping and with no other recourse, he thought that the best thing he could do would be to call in an extremely skillful surgeon from Alexandria, and have him do what he was too angry to let the other surgeons do. This world-famous specialist came, and examined with his trained eye the excellent work the others had done, as was clear from the healthy residual scar tissue. Whereupon, the specialist behaved like a man of principle and persuaded Innocent to allow the surgeons to have the satisfaction of terminating a case on which they had obviously worked so well and so long. He admitted that no cure was possible without a second operation, but protested that it would be utterly against his professional ethics to deprive others of the satisfaction of completing an operation in which so little remained to be done and, especially, to deprive men whose skillful work and careful handling of the patient he so much admired. So the surgeons returned to the good graces of Innocent, and it was agreed that they should incise the remaining sinus in the presence of the Alexandrian specialist. The operation was set for the next day, all the doctors admitting that it was the only way to heal the trouble.

Once they were gone, the whole household set up a wail of grief for their master that was worse than a funeral, and we had the hardest time keeping them calm. Among Innocent's habitual visitors who happened to be there that day were that holy man of blessed memory, Saturninus, then Bishop of Uzalum, and Gulosus, a holy priest, and some deacons of the church at Carthage, one of whom was my highly esteemed friend and now colleague in the episcopate, Aurelius. He is the sole survivor of that group of guests, and I have often compared notes with him regarding this remarkable mercy of God and have found that his memory of the

events corresponds with my own. Their visit, as usual, was in the evening, and Innocent begged them, with tearfulness in his voice, to please come the next day to what, he was sure, would be not merely his agony but his death. The very thought of the previous pains filled him with fear, and he was certain that he would die under the hands of the surgeons. Everyone tried to comfort him, and to exhort him to put his trust in God, and face His will unflinchingly.

Then we all began to pray. The rest of us prayed, as we usually do, on our knees and prostrate on the floor, but Innocent literally threw himself flat as though he had been violently struck by some powerful blow, and then burst into prayer so vehemently, so feelingly, so pathetically and wept with such indescribable groaning and sobbing that he shook in every fiber of his being and all but choked. How any of the others could pray, with all this pitiable petitioning to distract them, I do not know. As for myself, no formula of prayer was possible. All I could do was let my heart repeat this short refrain: 'Lord, if Thou dost not hear such prayers, what prayers of any saints can move Thee?' It seemed to me that, with one more sigh, the poor man would have prayed himself to death.

At last, we all arose and, when the bishop had given us his blessing, left. There was one final request that all would be present in the morning and, on our part, one last exhortation for the sufferer to have fortitude.

The dreaded day had hardly dawned when all these men of God were at the door to keep their promises. The doctors entered. The needed preparations were immediately under way. As each piece of frightening metal flashed, we gasped and held our breath. Then, while the patient's body was being properly disposed for the hand of the operating surgeon,

Innocent's closest friends[2] stood by, whispering words of comfort to cheer his drooping spirit. The bandages were removed. The site was exposed. The surgeon took a look. With the scalpel in one hand, he palpated for the offending sinus. He searched once more with his eye. He probed again with his fingers. He exhausted every means of medical examination. But there was nothing to be found except perfectly healthy tissue!

Imagine the burst of joy and the flood of grateful tears, the praise and thanks to the God of mercy and of power, that broke from every one there present. It was a scene too much for any pen to tell. I can only leave it to the meditation of my readers.

There was the case, also in Carthage, of Innocentia, a woman of the highest social standing, and, at the same time, deeply religious. She was suffering from cancer of the breast, a malady, as the profession holds, that yields to no known medical treatment. In the case of cancer, all that is usually done is to excise completely the portion of the body where the trouble begins, or else, following the supposed opinion of Hippocrates, to attempt no treatment whatever and so prolong somewhat a life that is already doomed. Innocentia, accepting the second alternative, on the advice of an eminent doctor who was a close friend of the family, betook herself solely to God in prayer. However, just before Easter, she had a dream, in which she was told to wait on the women's side of the baptistry until the first of the newly baptized women should approach and then to ask her to make the sign of

2 *Eis . . . quorum erat maior auctoritas defectum animi eius consolando erigentibus.* Cf. Cicero, *Familiares* 6.6.2.: *animum . . . amicissimi hominis auctoritate confirmandum.*

Christ on the affected breast. This she did, and she was immediately cured.

The doctor who had told her to dispense with all treatment if she cared to live a little longer now examined the patient and found her completely cured, though his previous examination showed that she was suffering from cancer. Of course, he was all curiosity, and insisted on her telling him what medication she had used. He was dying to find out, if he could, a treatment that would upset the theory of Hippocrates. When he heard her story, his lips and face expressed nothing but contempt, and she was dreadfully afraid that he was going to break out into some blasphemy against Christ. However, he maintained a religious urbanity and merely observed: 'I had hoped that you might have told me something significant.' Innocentia was shocked by his indifference, but promptly replied: 'Well, for Christ to heal a cancer after He raised to life a man four days dead is not, I suppose, particularly significant.'

Now when the facts reached my ears, I was positively angry that so great a miracle, wrought on a person who was so far from being of no consequence, could happen in a city like Carthage and not be publicized. In fact, I felt it my duty to administer to her an emphatic protest. She replied that she had not been wholly silent on the matter. However, when I made inquiries among her closest acquaintances, they confessed that they had heard nothing of the affair. I turned on Innocentia and complained: 'This is what you mean, then, by not being wholly silent. You have not mentioned the miracle even to your most intimate friends.' Then, since she had told me only the outlines of the story, I made her retell it in every detail just as it happened, while her friends, who were there, listened in immense amazement and, when she was done, glorified God.

Then there is the story of a doctor in Carthage who was

afflicted by the gout. He was enrolled among those who were to be baptized, but on the night before his baptism he dreamed that some demons, as he imagined, in the guise of crinkly-haired Negro youths, forbade him to be baptized that year. When he refused to obey, they trampled on his gouty foot, causing him the most excruciating pain he had ever felt. When he awoke, he was all the more eager to defeat the demons and refused to put off the laver of regeneration. He was baptized and, in that very moment, not only did the extraordinary pain he then felt disappear, but the malady itself left him, never to return for the rest of his long life. Yet, practically no one has ever heard of this except myself and a few of the faithful who had an opportunity to learn the facts.

There was an ex-showman of Curubis who was suffering from paralysis and a bad case of hernia in the scrotum. As soon as he was baptized, both troubles disappeared and he was restored to health. He left the font as sound in body as though he had never been afflicted. Yet, outside of Curubis, hardly more than a handful of people ever heard of the facts which could so easily have been learned. As for myself, as soon as word reached me, I arranged to have Bishop Aurelius send this man to Carthage, even though I had no reason whatever for doubting those who first told me the story.

One of my neighbors, named Hesperius, of a family of government officials, owns a farm in the village of Zubedi, in the district of Fussala. Realizing that the diseases of his cattle and the sickness of his servants and other troubles were traceable to the influence of evil spirits, he came, in my absence, to ask if one of the priests would come out to Zubedi to drive away the spirits by prayer. One of the priests went, offered there the Sacrifice of the Body of Christ and prayed as fervently as he could for relief from these molestations. By the mercy of God, they all suddenly ceased.

This man, Hesperius, had been given a piece of holy soil brought by a friend from near the place in Jerusalem where Christ was buried and rose from the dead on the third day. This soil Hesperius kept suspended in his room as a protection against diabolical incursions. But, once the exorcism had been successful, he was worried to know what he should do with the holy soil. He felt guilty of a certain irreverence in keeping it any longer in his own room. Now, about this time, a fellow bishop, Maximinus of Synita, and I happened to be in the neighborhood of Zubedi and, being invited, called on Hesperius. He told us his story and his scruples and asked us to have the holy soil buried in a place where a sanctuary might be built and prayers said and Christians assemble for the celebration of the divine Mysteries. We made no objection and so it was done. Now, one of the neighboring peasants was paralyzed. Hearing of the shrine, he begged his parents to bring him to that holy place without delay. He was taken; he prayed; his legs were suddenly made sound; he was able to walk home without help.

There is an estate in the country less than thirty miles from Hippo Regius, called Victoriana. The shrine there is dedicated to the martyrs of Milan, Protasius and Gervasius. To this shrine there was brought a youth who had become possessed by a devil, one summer's day at noon, when he was cooling his horse in the flowing waters of a river. This demoniac was lying near the altar of the shrine as though he were as dead as a corpse, when the lady of the villa came to vespers and evening prayers, as was her wont, along with her maids and some nuns. As soon as they began to sing, the demoniac, as though struck by the sound, came to and, trembling all over, took hold of the altar. Unable or not daring to move, there he remained, as though he had been tied or fastened to the altar. The demon, crying out at the top of his voice, began to beg for mercy, and to confess where

and when he had taken possession of the young man. Finally, the demon declared that he would depart. He did so, but not before threatening to work havoc with certain parts of the young man's body. These parts the demon named. Thereupon, an eye was found torn from its socket, resting on the cheek and hanging by a tiny vein as by a root. The pupil, which was black, turned white.

Those who had witnessed all this, and others who had been attracted by the screaming, prostrated themselves in prayer. They were overjoyed by the youth's return to sanity, but grieved by the dislocation of the eye. Some insisted that a doctor be called, but the youth's brother-in-law, who had brought him to the shrine, said simply: 'God who put this demon to flight is able, through the prayers of His saints, to restore the sight of this eye.' Thereupon, as best he could, he pushed the eye back into its socket, bandaged it with his handkerchief, and said that the bandage must not be removed for at least a week. A week later, the bandage was removed. The eye was found to be in perfect condition. Many other miracles occurred at that shrine, but I need not mention them here.

I know of another demoniac, a young girl of Hippo, who was freed from possession as soon as she anointed herself with some oil into which the tears of a priest who was praying for her had fallen. I also know of a bishop who prayed for a demoniac, a young man whom he had never seen, but who was at once delivered from the devil.

There is a good story of the poor old man, Florentius, who lived here in Hippo. He was a man of prayer who eked out a living by repairing old clothes, but when he lost his own cloak he had no money to buy another. So, he betook himself to the Shrine of the Twenty Martyrs, the most famous shrine in these parts, and there, in a loud voice, he prayed for a new cloak. Of course, some of the young

people who were there could not help laughing; and, even when the old man left, they went after him, teasing him for asking the martyrs to give him fifty *folles* to buy a cloak. The old man said nothing. He just went along the beach. What should he see there but an immense fish, tossed up by the waves and still squirming. The good-natured young fellows helped the old man to catch it, and he went right off to Catosus, a good Christian and the cook at the Restaurant Conditaria, told him what happened, and sold him the fish for 300 *folles*. Florentius had in mind to buy enough wool to have his wife make him a complete outfit. In the meantime, however, the cook, while cutting up the fish, found in its gullet a gold ring. Partly out of pity and partly out of religious scruples, he gave the ring to the old man, saying: 'Look, this is the way the Twenty Martyrs have put a suit on your back!'

At Aquae Tibilitanae, there was once a procession in which Bishop Praejectus was carrying a relic of the glorious martyr, St. Stephen, and, while an immense crowd was milling around him, a blind woman begged to be led to the bishop. She handed him the flowers she had in her hand. He took them and applied them to her eyes. Immediately she was able to see. Full of joy, she took her place in the procession, needing no one to lead her, and the people followed in amazement behind her.

There is a relic of the same martyr reserved in the township of Synita, not far from the city of Hippo. Once it was being carried by Bishop Lucillus of Synita in a processison, with the line of people stretching out before him and behind him. The bishop was suffering—as he had been for a long time—from a fistula, and had already arranged for an operation to be performed by a doctor who was a great friend of his. Suddenly, during the procession of the relic,

the fistula dried up and not a trace of it was ever after found on his body.

Here is another miracle wrought by a relic of the same saint. Eucharius, a Spanish priest stationed in Calama, had long been suffering from stone. Bishop Possidius applied the relic and the priest was cured. Sometime later, however, he fell a victim to another sickness and was so near death that they had already bound his hands. Then his tunic was taken to touch the relic of the saint. It was brought back and placed over the apparently dead body. The priest was at once restored to life.

In the same town of Calama, there lived a man of the highest social distinction, named Martial. He was elderly, a pagan, and strongly opposed to Christianity, although his daughter was a Catholic and his son-in-law was a recent convert. Martial fell sick. The two young people begged him, with tears in their eyes, to turn Christian. He refused emphatically and indignantly dismissed them from his presence. The son-in-law decided to go to the shrine of St. Stephen, and there he prayed with his whole soul that God might give Martial the grace not to put off his conversion to Christ. He prayed and prayed, with groans and tears and the deepest feelings of ardent piety. As he left, he took a few flowers from the altar and, at night when Martial was asleep, put the flowers on his pillow. Sure enough, before dawn the next day, Martial called out for someone to run for the bishop, who, as it happened, was visiting me in Hippo. Martial then asked for the priests. They arrived. He said: 'I believe.' To the joy and astonishment of all, he was baptized. He continued to live for some time, but never did he stop from repeating the words: 'Christ, receive my spirit,' although he had never heard that these were the last words of the blessed

Stephen as he was being stoned to death.[3] These were the last words of Martial, too, for, before long, he died.

It was also in Calama that three victims of the gout were healed through the intercession of the same martyr, Stephen. Two were natives and another had come there on pilgrimage. The natives were at once cured, but the pilgrim heard a voice telling him what means he should take when the pain was acute. He followed the instruction and he, too, was at once cured.

There is another shrine of St. Stephen in a village called Audurus. Once, when a child was playing in the square before the church, a cart drawn by oxen left the road and one of the wheels ran over the child. While he was breathing his last, his mother snatched him up and placed him on the altar of the relic. The child not only returned to consciousness, but showed no sign of the crushing he had suffered.

Near Audurus, there is an estate called Villa Caspaliana. There, a consecrated virgin fell sick and was on the brink of death. Her parents took her habit to touch the relic, but, before they could return, she died. However, the moment the corpse was clothed with the habit, the breath of life returned and the nun was restored to health.

There was a Syrian named Bassus living in Hippo. He had a sick daughter in danger of death. So he took her robe to touch the relic of St. Stephen. There at the shrine he prayed for the health of his daughter. He was still praying when some of his servants came running from his home to tell him that the girl was dead. However, some of his friends who were also praying there received the news first, and forbade the servants to tell the father for fear he might break down in public. However, when he reached home, he found the house filled with wailing. He threw the girl's dress on the corpse. Her life was restored.

3 Cf. Acts 7.59.

It was in Hippo, too, that the son of a neighbor of mine, Irenaeus, a tax collector, died. The corpse was laid out; the funeral was arranged; everyone was grieving and sorrowing. One of the friends who had come to console the family suggested that the body be anointed with oil from the shrine of St. Stephen. This was no sooner done than the boy came back to life.

Here I am in a fix. I promised to hurry on with the writing of this work. How can I delay to tell all the miracles I know? On the other hand, I know that many of my fellow Catholics, when they come to read what I have written, will complain that I have left out any number of miracles which they happen to know as well as I do. All I can do is to ask them now to forgive me, and to remember how long a task it would be to tell them and how impossible it would be to do both that and also my duty of bringing this work to an end. Actually, if I kept merely to miracles of healing and omitted all others, and if I told only those wrought by this one martyr, the glorious St. Stephen, and if I limited myself to those that happened here at Hippo and Calama, I should have to fill several volumes and, even then, I could do no more than tell those cases that have been officially recorded and attested for public reading in our churches.

This recording and attesting, in fact, is what I took care to have done, once I realized how many miracles were occurring in our own day and which were so like the miracles of old and also how wrong it would be to allow the memory of these marvels of divine power to perish from among our people. It is only two years ago that the keeping of records was begun here in Hippo, and already, at this writing, we have nearly seventy attested miracles. I know with certain knowledge of many others which have not, so far, been officially recorded. And, of course, at Calama, where the recording began much earlier and where miracles are more

frequent, the number of attested cases is incomparably greater.

So, too, at Uzalum, a town near the city of Utica, there have been, to my knowledge, many notable miracles wrought through this same martyr. Thanks to Bishop Evodius, there was a shrine there dedicated to St. Stephen long before ours was established. But the custom of taking formal depositions from witnesses was not there in vogue, nor is it now—unless, perhaps, it has been very recently introduced. Not long ago when I was there, a lady of great social distinction, Petronia by name, was miraculously cured of a serious and long-standing sickness which had baffled the doctors. I urged her, with Bishop Evodius concurring, to have a written deposition drawn up which could be read in church to the people, and she obediently accepted the suggestion.

One detail of this deposition I must mention here, in spite of the urgency to return to the main theme of this work. It is this. Petronia states that she had been persuaded by a certain Jew to wear, as a remedy for her complaint, under her clothes and next to her skin, a belt made of braided hair on which was to be strung a ring. Underneath the jewel of this ring, she was to place a stone, taken from the kidney of an ox. Thus begirdled, she set out on pilgrimage from Carthage to the shrine of the martyr. She rested for a while at her villa on the river Bagrada, but, on rising one morning to resume her journey, what was her astonishment to find the ring lying on the floor at her feet. She at once felt for the braided belt she was wearing and there it was tied as firmly as ever. Then she thought that the ring must have snapped and fallen off, but it was perfectly solid as before. This she took as a miraculous token that she was to be cured at the shrine. So, she tore off the belt and threw it, along with the ring, into the river.

Perhaps it may be too much to expect that people will believe this who refuse to believe that the Lord Jesus was

born without any lesion in the maidenhead of His mother and that He passed through closed doors into the presence of His disciples. But, at least, such people should investigate facts and, if they find them true, should accept them. The lady in question is of the highest distinction both by birth and by marriage and she lives in Carthage. In regard to a person so outstanding, living in a city so important, anyone who really wants to find out the facts can do so. And as for the martyr by whose intercession the lady was restored to health, certainly he believed in the Son of the Virgin Mother, and believed in Him who passed through closed doors to reach His disciples, and believed in Him who ascended into heaven with the flesh in which He rose from the dead—and this is the miracle on account of which I have been relating all these attesting miracles. Moreover, the reason why so many miracles are wrought through this blessed martyr is that he laid down his life for this faith.

It is a simple fact, then, that there is no lack of miracles even in our day. And the God who works the miracles we read of in the Scripture uses any means and manner He chooses. The only trouble is that these modern miracles are not so well known as the earlier ones, nor are they sufficiently pounded into people's memory by constant reading, so that they may stick, as it were, like gravel in cement.[4] Even where pains are taken, as is now the case in Hippo, to have the written depositions of the beneficiaries of these graces read to the people, only those in church hear the stories, and that only once, and the many who are not present hear nothing, and those who have listened forget in a day or so, and you hardly ever hear of a person who has heard a deposition telling it to someone else who was not in church for the reading.

However, this is not the case with one miracle that hap-

4 . . . *neque, ut non excidant animo, quasi glarea memoriae, crebra lectione tunduntur.*

pened here in Hippo. It was no more remarkable than others I have mentioned, but it was so clear and obvious to everyone that no one who lives here could have failed to see it or, at least, to hear about it, and certainly no one could ever forget it. It involved seven brothers and three sisters belonging to a noble family of Caesarea in Cappodocia. When their father died, they did some injustice to their widowed mother. This was so bitterly resented that she put a curse on them. Whereupon, God so punished the children that all of them were afflicted by a dreadful convulsion of their whole bodies. The humiliation in the eyes of their neighbors became unbearable, and all of them scattered in different directions and began to wander throughout the Roman world. Of these ten, two, Paul and Palladia, turned up at Hippo, after their plight had made them notorious in ever so many other places. They arrived here about two weeks before Easter, and day after day they came to church to pray before the shrine of the glorious martyr, St. Stephen. They prayed that God would forgive their sins and give them back their health. Both in church and wherever they went throughout the city they were a spectacle for all to see. Some of our people had seen them in other cities and knew the cause of the convulsions and told their friends the story.

Well, Holy Week passed; Easter Sunday dawned. The basilica was crowded. There at the shrine, grasping the bars of the latticework around the reliquary, stood the young man, praying. Of a sudden, he fell prostrate and lay there as if in a trance. However, the convulsions, that ordinarily continued even in his sleep, stopped. The crowd around him were filled with awe and fear. Many wept. Some wanted to lift him to his feet, but others prevented this, thinking it better to wait for him to die. Just as suddenly, he arose. The trembling had stopped. He was cured. There he stood, perfectly normal, looking at the crowd who kept gazing at him. Then everyone

burst into a prayer of thankfulness to God. The whole church soon rang with the clamor of rejoicing. One after another, people rushed to where I was sitting, ready to begin the processional entrance into the basilica. Each of them told me again the news I had just been told. Then, as I was rejoicing and thanking God, the young man himself, followed by the rest of the crowd, broke in upon me. He knelt down before me, then rose to receive the kiss of peace.

In the crowded church, cries of joy rose up everywhere: 'Thanks be to God.' 'Praise be to God.' No tongue was silent. When I held up my hand in salutation, the cries broke out afresh, louder than ever. Only when silence was finally restored could the Scriptural selections appointed for Easter be read. When the time came for the sermon, I said very little, in spite of the joyousness of what had happened. I wanted to allow the people to meditate in their own minds on the divine eloquence of the divine deed rather than to listen to any mere words of mine.

The man stayed for dinner, and told me the whole tragic story both of his mother and of his brothers and sisters. Next day, after my sermon, I announced that, on the following day, the written record of the miracle would be read in public. And so, on the third day after Easter, I had the brother and sister stand on the steps of the choir, where I was accustomed to speak, and there listen to a reading of the deposition. Every eye of every man and woman in the audience was fixed on the pair—the sister still shaken by convulsions and the brother perfectly calm. Thus, those who had not seen the brother before the cure could gauge the measure of God's mercy by looking at his sister. They saw in him so much to thank God for, and in her so much that called for prayer. When the recital[5] was finished, I asked the brother

5 This deposition can be found among the Sermons (No. 322) of St. Augustine.

and sister to remove themselves from the gaze of the congregation. Then I began to speak at length of the whole affair.[6] I was still speaking when, all of a sudden, from the shrine of the martyr, new cries of rejoicing could be heard. The people who were listening to me first turned in that direction, and then began rushing to the shrine. What the girl had done when she left the choir was, in fact, to go straight to the shrine to pray to the holy martyr. And as soon as she touched the metal grating she collapsed, just as her brother had done, into a kind of trance. From this she rose up cured.

I was just asking what had happened to cause all this hubbub and happiness when in came the people bringing the recovered girl back from the shrine to the basilica. Such a clamor of wonderment then went up and such sobbing for joy that I thought it would never end. She was led to the very spot where just before she had stood full of convulsions. They hailed her now for being like her brother, just as they had grieved for her when she was so unlike him. They had hardly had time to utter a prayer for her, and here she was, with the prayer of their hearts already answered. The exultation continued, and the wordless praise to God was shouted so loud that my ears could scarcely stand the din. But, of course, the main point was that, in the hearts of all this clamoring crowd, there burned that faith in Christ for which the martyr Stephen shed his blood.

Chapter 9

Now, the faith to which all these miracles bear witness is the faith that holds that Christ rose bodily from the dead and ascended with His flesh into heaven, because, of course, the martyrs were witnesses. That, in fact, is what the word

6 What he said can be found in Sermons 323 and 324.

'martyr' means. The martyrs were witnesses to this faith. It was because they bore witness to this faith that they found the world hostile and cruel. Yet, they overcame the world, not by defending themselves, but by preferring to die for Christ. Those whose intercession has the power from the Lord to work these miracles were killed on account of His name and died for faith in Him. First came the miracle of their fortitude in dying for this faith, and then came, as a consequence, the power revealed in these miracles.

This question, then, calls for an answer: If the resurrection of the flesh into eternal life did not occur in the case of Christ and is not to occur hereafter in our case, in accordance with the promises made by Christ and those in the Old Testament which likewise foretold the coming of Christ, then how explain these great wonders wrought by dead martyrs? For, they were put to death precisely for that faith which proclaims this resurrection. It makes no difference whether we say that it is God Himself who works these miracles in the marvelous way that the Eternal operates in the temporal order, or whether we say that God works these miracles through His servants. And, in regard to what He does through His servants, it is all one whether He does these things through the spirits of martyrs, as though they were still living in their bodies, or whether He uses angels and effects His purposes by His orders, which are given invisibly, inaudibly, immutably. In that case, miracles which we think are done by martyrs are the result, rather, of their prayers and intercession, and not of their actions. Or God may have varying means to His different ends and these means may be altogether incomprehensible to the minds of men. But the main point is that all miracles are witnesses to that faith which proclaims the supreme miracle of the resurrection of the flesh into life everlasting.

Chapter 10

Perhaps some pagans will here object that their gods, too, have worked miracles. Well, that would not be so bad if they are merely beginning to compare their divinities to our dead mortals. But they go further and claim to have gods who were once human, like Hercules, Romulus and the rest, and were then raised to divine honors. Of course, our martyrs are not divine, since it is one and the same God that both we and our martyrs acknowledge. Besides, there is no comparison between the miracles wrought at the shrines of our martyrs and those reported as occurring in the pagan temples. Or, if there seems to be some similarity, then, just as Moses worsted Pharao's magicians, so certainly their gods suffer in comparison with our martyrs. Take the matter of motive in the two cases. The demons are motivated by a movement of impure pride to get themselves reckoned gods, whereas, when the martyrs intercede with God or are used by God—because it is God alone who works our miracles—the sole purpose is to further that faith by which we believe that no martyrs can be divine. The reason of this is that there is but one God, who is their God and also our God.

Note, too, that pagans build temples and set up altars, have instituted a priesthood, and offer sacrifices, to honor their demons, whereas we Christians never build temples to the martyrs as though they were divine; we merely erect shrines where we venerate dead mortals whose spirits, we believe, abide with God.[1] And when we erect altars, we offer our Sacrifice, not to the martyrs, but to the one God who is their God and ours. So, too, in this Sacrifice, the names of the martyrs are merely recalled as mortals who overcame the world by confessing God. The priest who is offering the Sacrifice would never dream of invoking the martyrs as

1 Cf. above, 8.27.

divine. The Sacrifice is offered to God, not to the martyrs in whose shrines it happens to be offered. The reason for this is that the priest who offers up the Holy Sacrifice is not the priest of the martyrs, but the priest of God. And, of course, what is offered up in our Sacrifice is the Body of Christ, which cannot be offered to the martyrs since they are themselves members of the Body of Christ.

We must, then, make our choice: to believe either the martyrs or the demons, either those whose miracles have no purpose but to help men believe that Christ is God, or those whose marvels are meant only to get men to believe that the demons themselves are divine. To believe the demons is to believe beings who are willing to have their worst sins reckoned sacred,[2] whereas martyrs would not even want rites made out of their martyrdom. They desire only that anything they have done to deserve real praise should be directed wholly to His glory in whom alone they have their glory. It is 'in the Lord' that their souls are 'praised.'[3]

Let us, then, choose to believe those who both proclaim what is true and perform what is miraculous. For, they first proclaimed the truth and suffered for it before they were given power to be workers of wonders. And of all the truths they preached the chief is this: that Christ rose from the dead and was the first to reveal that immortality of resurrection in the flesh which, as He has promised, is one day to be ours—whether in the beginning of the world to come or at the end of this present time.

Chapter 11

Against the great gift of God, the resurrection of the body, those of whom it is written, 'The Lord knowest the thoughts

2 Cf. above, 2.8.
3 Cf. Ps. 33.3.

of men, that they are vain,'[1] put up an argument based on the respective densities of the four elements. They accept the teaching of their master, Plato, to the effect that the two principal and extreme elements of the universe[2] are linked with the intermediate elements, air and water. And since we have an ascending series—first, the earth, second, water above the earth, third, air above the water, and fourth, heaven above the air—it follows, they claim, that no earthly body can be in heaven. This order is preserved only because the elements are kept in equilibrium by their respective densities.

Now, just take a look at the kind of argument used by human weakness to contradict the omnipotence of God! If all this is true, what in the world are all those earthly bodies doing in the air, seeing that the air is the third element and the earth is the first? Can anyone suppose that God, who has given to the earthly bodies of birds some power to keep themselves in the air by the agility of wings and feathers, is nevertheless unable to give to the immortalized bodies of men some power which makes it possible for them to live in the very highest heaven? Note, too, that just as fish, which are animals of the water, live *under* the water, so, in this theory, the animals of the earth that cannot fly—and that includes men—ought to live *under* the earth! And, surely, an earthly animal that can manage to live in the third of the elements, air, ought to be able to live in the second, namely, water. How, then, explain that if an earthly animal is compelled to live in this second element, which lies just above the earth, it is drowned and, hence, if it is to live, must rise to the third element? There must be some mistake here in regard to the ordering of the elements; and, since the mistake is not in nature itself, it must be in men's minds. I have already pointed

1 Ps. 93.11.
2 Namely, fire (or heaven) and earth. Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, p. 32.

out in Book XIII[3] that, for all their density, certain earthly bodies like lead can be so shaped by human art as to be able to float in water. If that is so, what prevents the Divine Artificer, who has all power, from giving a quality to the human body to enable it to be carried to heaven and abide there?

The simple truth is that no recourse to arguments based on the hierarchy of the elements proves anything against what I have said above. For, if the ascending order is, first, earth, second, water, third, air, fourth, heaven, there is still something higher, namely, the spiritual nature of the soul. It makes no difference whether you say, with Aristotle, that the soul is a fifth element or, with Plato, that it is not a body at all. In the Aristotelian view, it is higher than the other four; and if it is not an element of any kind, it must be ranked still higher. This being so, what is the soul doing in any earthly body? What can so rarefied a thing be doing in a mass so dense as a body; the lightest of all things in a thing so heavy; the quickest of all things in a thing so slow? Why should not a soul with all these excellencies of nature be able to serve as the means of lifting a body to heaven? And if, under present conditions, bodies of an earthly nature can drag souls downward, why, under other conditions, could not souls draw earthly bodies upward?

But let us turn now to those miracles of the gods which the pagans set up in competition with the miracles of our martyrs. If they prove anything, they prove our point. Take their great marvel of the Vestal virgin as Varro tells the story. To prove her innocence when she was falsely accused of adultery, she filled a sieve with water from the Tiber and carried it to her judges without losing a single drop. We have to ask: Who kept the heavy water above the sieve? Who prevented the water from dropping through the holes to the

3 Cf. above, 13.18.

ground? Their only answer must be: Some god or some demon. Very well. But, no god can be greater than the God who created the world, and no demon is more powerful than an angel who serves the God who made the world. If, then, some lesser god or some angel or some demon could so hold the heavy and humid element suspended in the air as, in appearance, to change the very nature of water, why cannot God, who is all-powerful, who is the Creator of all these elements, so take away the weight of an earthly body as to permit a spiritualized body to dwell in the same element that He chose as the abode of the life-giving spirit?

There is another weak point in the theory of the elements. Air is placed in an intermediate position, with fire above and water below it. How explain, then, the fact that, often enough, we find air with water both above and below it and air in between water and earth? After all, everyone knows that clouds are composed of water and that air is found between these watery clouds and the waters of the ocean. On what theory of the densities and hierarchy of the elements can one explain that the waters now raging between the earthly banks of the most violent torrents were once suspended high in the air as the clouds? And why is it a fact that, wherever there is dry land on any part of the globe, we have air in between sky and earth, whereas in theory the proper place for air is between sky and water, just as the theoretical place for water is in between air and earth?

One last difficulty. In the Platonic theory of extremes linked by means we have the two intermediate elements, air and water, between the extremes, fire and earth, with fire in the highest position and earth in the lowest, as though it were the foundation on which the universe rested. Now, if according to this theory it is impossible for earth to be in heaven, why is it possible for fire to be on earth? The theory calls for the two extreme elements, the highest and the lowest,

fire and earth, to keep their proper places. Well, now, if there is any reason why the lowest, earth, can never be in heaven, then, for the same reason, the highest, fire, can never be on earth. If, in this theory, there can be no particle of earth, either now or hereafter, in heaven, then we ought not to see, in fact, any fire on earth. But the simple truth is that there is fire, not only on the earth, but under the earth, as is proved by erupting volcanoes. Fire is a human necessity here on earth and, what is more, it can be produced here by means of flints and chips, both of which are indubitably earthly bodies.

Of course, the Platonists will reply that the fire on earth is a different kind of fire. Heavenly fire, they say, is tranquil, pure, non-destructive, and indestructible, whereas fire on earth is flaming, smoky, destructive, and destructible. But why, then, does not this destructive fire destroy the volcanoes and the subterranean cavities where it goes on burning? Granted, however, that earthly fire, as becomes its earthly home, is different from its heavenly counterpart, the question may be asked: Why do the Platonists object to our believing that, just as corruptible fire is now at home on earth, so, when the nature of earthly bodies has been made incorruptible, it will be at home in heaven?

The conclusion from all this is that there is nothing in the specific gravity and hierarchy of the elements to make it incongruous for the omnipotent God to give our bodies such a change of nature that they, too, can be at home in heaven.

Chapter 12

Under the pretense of scrupulous inquiry, the pagans have a trick of ridiculing the belief in the resurrection of the body. Thus, they will ask with mock seriousness: Do aborted fetuses

share in this resurrection? And, taking a cue from our Lord's words, 'Not a hair of your head shall perish,'[1] they ask whether strength and stature of body are to be the same for all or different. For, if all bodies are to be the same and if abortions are to be resurrected, where will they get the stature which they lacked on earth? And even if abortions are not to rise inasmuch as they were not really born, the same difficulty arises in regard to small children. How are they to make up the full measure of stature which they lack by reason of dying in childhood? (And, of course, Christians will not deny the resurrection of children who were not merely born, but reborn in baptism.) How, then, can equality of stature be achieved? If all are to have the stature of the tallest and broadest specimens of humanity, then not merely children but many besides will have to make up for what they lacked on earth, and, it will be asked, how can this be possible if each of us is to have the stature he had on earth?

One possibility is that suggested by St. Paul in the texts: 'Until we all attain . . . to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ' and 'Whom he . . . predestined to become conformed to the image of his Son.'[2] If we are to take these words to mean that the stature and appearance of the body of Christ is to be the norm for all human bodies in His Kingdom which is to come, then we are open to more questions: What becomes of the promise, 'Not a hair of your head shall perish,' if so much of the actual body is to perish in the case of those who must be reduced in stature? And the matter of the hair may be urged: Will all the hair cut off by the barbers be restored? And if it is, is there anyone who will not dread such a deformity? And then there are the finger nails that have been clipped. Must not everything be restored that was sacrificed to personal appearance? And,

1 Luke 21.18.
2 Eph. 4.13; Rom. 8.29.

then, where will be the physical beauty which, in immortal life, should be greater than in this corruptible life? And if the finger nails are not to be restored, they will have perished. How, then, can it be true that not a hair of the head is to perish?

And as with stature, so with skinniness and plumpness. If we are all to be the same, then there can be no one who is thinner or fatter than others. Some, then, must be reduced and some must put on flesh. Hence, not all can be as they were on earth. Some must gain and some must lose.

Then there is the serious and perplexing problem of physical disintegration after death. Some parts of the body turn to dust and other parts are exhaled off into the air. Some bodies are devoured by wild beasts and others are consumed by fire. Some perish by shipwreck and others are drowned, and such bodies rot and dissolve into liquid. Many who reflect on such facts refuse to believe that all these elements will be reintegrated into the original bodies. The pagans like to recall all the blotches and blemishes that occur at birth or later, all the human monstrosities that are born, and then mockingly ask: What kind of resurrection will there be in cases like these? If we say that no such blotches are to reappear, they will confound us by boldly asking: What did we hear you say of the place of the wounds with which the Lord Christ rose from the dead?

In this whole matter, there is one very difficult problem that can be proposed. Supposing a starving man eats the body of a fellow man, to whose body is the flesh to belong in the resurrection? It became the flesh of the starving man who fed upon it, as was clear when his emaciated frame became filled out. This case is often used not only to make fun of our faith in the resurrection, but also to bolster either the Platonic theory of human souls alternately living in real miseries and imaginary blessedness, or else the Porphyrian

idea that the soul transmigrates from body to body, but finally, after many vicissitudes, ends all miseries never to return to them.[3] Of course, in Porphyry's view there was no question of an immortal body, but only of a disembodied spirit.

Chapter 13

Such, then, in summary, are the objections to our faith in the resurrection. With God's grace aiding my efforts, I shall reply to them.

In regard to aborted fetuses that had life in their mother's womb and then died, I neither dare to deny that they will share in the resurrection, nor do I dare to affirm this. I can only say that I do not see how the resurrection of the dead should not apply to them, seeing that they are not excluded from the number of dead. It may be that not all the dead are to rise and that there will be some human souls without bodies in eternity, although they once had human bodies while in their mothers' wombs. Or it may be that all human souls will receive in the resurrection the bodies they had, wherever they may have lived and died. In this case, I do not see how I can deny a share in the resurrection to any living human fetus that dies in the womb. Whichever of these two possibilities one prefers to accept, what I am about to say in regard to children who die shortly after birth would hold for abortions—supposing they are to share in the resurrection.

Chapter 14

Now, what can I say of children except that they will not have, in the resurrection, the tiny bodies in which they died,

3 Cf. above, 10.29,30.

but that they will have, by God's wonderful and immediate action, the size they would have reached in time by the slow process of growth. It is true that our Lord said: 'Not a hair of your head shall perish,' but this implies only that there is to be no diminution, not that there are to be no accretions in the resurrection to supply deficiencies. An infant who dies is deficient in the fullness of bodily size, since even a perfectly shaped baby lacks that degree of size which, when growth is complete, will be that child's maximum.

Actually, we all have at the time of our conception and birth this measure of our maturity assigned to each of us, but it is a potential, not an actual, stature. It is the same with all the parts of our body. They are all present potentially in the seed, although some may still be lacking at the time of birth, as in the case of teeth and the like. There is, in fact, stamped on the seminal principle of every organic body the invisible design, so to speak, of what is yet to be woven[1] and which will appear only as time goes on. Thus, the child who is 'designed' to be tall or short is, in this sense, so already. It is because of this antecedent design that we need have no fear that in the resurrection there will be any incompleteness in our bodies. And even if there is to be equality for all, which means gigantic proportions for all—since the giants on earth cannot become less, in violation of Christ's promise about no hair perishing—certainly, the Creator, who made the universe out of nothing, is an artificer skilled enough to know just what will need to be added to each to achieve this uniformity.

Chapter 15

One thing is certain, namely, that Christ rose with the same stature He had when He died. And, it would be wrong to

1 . . . *ut ita dicam, liciatum videtur esse, quod nondum est, immo latet.*

say that, when the time for the general resurrection comes, anything will be added to the size in which He appeared to His disciples and was known to them, for the sake of making Him as tall as the tallest men. On the other hand, if we say that the taller bodies are to be reduced to conform to His size, then much of many bodies would have to 'perish,' contrary to His promise. We are left, therefore, with one conclusion, namely, that each of us will have that size we had in our maturity, even though we die in extreme old age; or we shall have that size we would have had in our maturity, in case we died earlier. Hence, we must interpret St. Paul's words concerning 'the mature measure of the fullness of Christ'[1] as meaning, for example, that the measure of His fullness will be reached when all of His members, the Christian people, will have been added to Christ the Head; or the words may mean, if they have reference to the resurrection, that all will rise with bodies neither less nor larger than the size of their mature age, and so in the age and vigor of thirty years—since that is the age reached by Christ and the age which even secular authorities consider the age of mature manhood and the age beyond which a man declines toward the weakness of old age. That is why St. Paul did not speak of the measure either of the body or of the stature but of 'the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ.'[2]

Chapter 16

The text of St. Paul which speaks of the 'saints predestined to become conformed to the image of his Son'[1] is susceptible

1 Eph. 4.13.
2 . . . *in mensuram aetatis plenitudinis Christi* (Vulgate).

1 Rom. 8.29.

of two interpretations. It may refer to the purely interior man, as does the parallel text: 'And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed in the newness of your mind.'[2] For we are certainly 'conformed' to the Son of God when we are 'transformed' so as not to be 'conformed to this world.'

A second interpretation is that we are to be 'conformed' to Him in immortality, as He was conformed to us in our mortality. And, in this sense, the test refers to the resurrection of our bodies. However, we must remember that, even in this interpretation, the 'conformity' is no more a matter of the size of our bodies in the resurrection than the 'measure' in the other text refers to size. It is a matter of maturity. All are to have, in the resurrection, the mature bodies they had, or would have had, in the maturity of their manhood. However, it would really make no difference to have, in form, a child's or an old man's body, since there is to be no weakness of soul nor even any infirmity in body. And so, if anyone cares to defend the position that we are to rise with the same shaped body we had at death, there is nothing to be gained by pursuing the debate.

Chapter 17

There are some who think that in the resurrection all will be men, and that women will lose their sex. This view springs from an interpretation of the texts: 'Until we all attain to . . . perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ'[1] and 'conformed to the image of the Son of God.'[2]

2 Rom. 12.2.

1 Eph. 4.13.
2 Rom. 8.29.

The interpretation is based on the fact that the man alone was made by God out of the 'slime of the earth,' whereas the woman was made from the man. For myself, I think that those others are more sensible who have no doubt that both sexes will remain in the resurrection. After all, there will then be none of that lust which is the cause of shame in connection with sex, and so, all will be as before the first sin, when the man and the woman were naked and felt no shame. In the resurrection, the blemishes of the body will be gone, but the nature of the body will remain. And, certainly, a woman's sex is her nature and no blemish; only, in the resurrection, there will be no conception or child-bearing associated with her nature. Her members will remain as before, with the former purpose sublimated to a newer beauty. There will be no concupiscence to arouse and none will be aroused, but her womanhood will be a hymn to the wisdom of God, who first made her a woman, and to the clemency of God, who freed her from the corruption into which she fell.

Even in the beginning, when woman was made from a rib in the side of the sleeping man, that had no less a purpose than to symbolize prophetically the union of Christ and His Church. Adam's sleep was a mystical foreshadowing of Christ's death, and when His dead body hanging from the Cross was pierced by the lance, it was from His side that there issued forth that blood and water which, as we know, signify the sacraments by which the Church is built up. 'Built' is the very word the Scripture uses in connection with Eve: 'He built the rib into a woman,'[3] *aedificavit,* not *formavit* or *finxit*. So, too, St. Paul speaks of 'building up the body of Christ'[4] which is His Church. Therefore, woman is as much the creation of God as man is. If she was made from

3 Gen. 2.22.
4 Eph. 4.12.

the man, this was to show her oneness with him; and if she was made in the way she was, this was to prefigure the oneness of Christ and the Church.

God, then, who made us man and woman will raise us up as man and woman. This is proved by Christ's own words. He was asked by the Sadducees, who denied the Resurrection: 'At the resurrection, of which of the seven will she be the wife?' (She had been married by seven brothers in turn, each hoping 'to raise up the issue of his brother,' as the Law prescribed.[5]) Jesus answered: 'You err because you know neither the Scripture nor the power of God. For at the resurrection they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.' (Notice that He did not say: The wife you ask about will no longer be a woman but a man.) And when He said they will be 'as the angels,' He meant like the angels in respect to immortality and beatitude, not like them in being spirits without bodies, nor like them in the resurrection, since angels had no need of a resurrection, simply because they could not die.

What our Lord said was that, in the resurrection, there would be no marriage. He did not say that there would be no women. In the context it would have been an easier answer to the question asked to have said that there would be no women—if that was to be the case in the resurrection. Actually, He affirmed that there would be women when He used the double expression: 'neither marry' (as men do) nor 'be given in marriage' (as in the case of women). In the resurrection, then, there will be those who on earth 'marry' and those who 'are given in marriage.' Only, in heaven there will be no marriage.

5 Cf. Matt. 22.23-30.

Chapter 18

If we are to understand what St. Paul meant when he said that we are 'to attain to perfect manhood,' we must consider the whole context, which reads as follows: 'He who descended, He it is who ascended also above the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He Himself gave some men as apostles, and some as prophets, others again as evangelists, and others as pastors and teachers, in order to perfect the saints for a work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ. And this He has done that we may be now no longer children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine devised in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, according to the wiles of error. Rather are we to practice the truth in love, and so grow up in all things in Him who is the head, Christ. For from Him the whole body (being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system according to the functioning in due measure of each single part) derives its increase to the building up of itself in love.'[1]

Here we have a picture of 'perfect manhood.' There is the 'Head' and the 'body' which consists of all its 'members' which, in due time, are to reach the 'fullness' and which, day by day, are added to the 'body' while the Church is being 'built up.' Hence the words: 'Now you are the body of Christ, member for member'[2]. . . for His body which is the Church[3]. . . . Because the bread is one we, though many, are one body.'[4] In reference to the building up of the Body,

1 Eph. 4.10-16.
2 1 Cor. 12.27.
3 Col. 1.24.
4 1 Cor. 10.17.

we have these words in our text: 'in order to perfect the saints for a work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ'; and these are followed by the words we are mainly concerned with: 'until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ,' and the rest. And then later, to show what 'body' he has in mind when he speaks of 'measure,' he says: 'We are to grow up in all things in Him who is the head, Christ. For from Him the whole body (being closely joined and knit together through every joint of the system according to the functioning in due measure of each single part) derives its increase.' Thus, the measure is the measure both 'of each single part' and also of the whole body, which is made up of all its parts, and thus is the 'measure of the fullness,' in the sense in which it is said: 'to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ.' It is this same fullness which is mentioned in the text: 'And Him He gave as head over all the Church, which indeed is His body, the fullness of Him who is wholly fulfilled in all.'[5]

However, even if there is a reference in this word, 'measure,' to the body which each of us is to have in the resurrection, there is nothing to prevent us from applying to woman what is expressly stated of man, since 'man' often means 'a human being,' as in the words, 'Blessed is the man who feareth the Lord,'[6] which certainly apply also to women who fear the Lord.

Chapter 19

And now for those difficulties about hair that has been cut off and nails that have been pared. The main point to be grasped is that, as nothing is to 'perish' if this loss would

5 Eph. 1.22,23.
6 Ps. 111.1.

result in any ugliness of body, so anything to be added must be distributed over the whole body and not be given to one point in a way to produce any unsightly excess. Something of the sort can be seen in the reshaping of the clay that has gone into the making of a pitcher. There is no need to replace the original clay that went to the making of the handle or the bottom in those particular places, so long as the whole of the clay is used in the refashioning and none is discarded in the process. Hence, if there would be any ugliness in restoring cut-off hair to the head or clipped-off nails to the fingers, they will not be replaced in their original positions. Nevertheless, they are not to perish. Such mutable matter can be changed into the flesh of the same body and take its place wherever the proportions of the whole are best preserved.

Another solution would be this. When our Lord said 'not a hair,' He was not thinking of length but of the number of hairs, as we see from these words: 'The hairs of your head are numbered.'[1] However, I still think that nothing which was a natural part of the body is to be lost. As for ugly excrescences—which have the purpose of reminding us of the penal condition of mortal life—they will be so integrated into the substance as a whole that no deformity will appear in any one part. After all, a human artist can make a botch of a statue and then reshape it into beauty without a loss of any of his material. It is not a matter of chiseling away some particular part that was ugly in itself or out of proportion. He can break down and remold the same mass of material so that nothing but the blemish disappears. And, of course, the omnipotent Artist can do this even better. There is no deformity of any human body, whether normal or exceptional or even monstrous, which He cannot so eliminate as to leave the total substance intact, while the ugliness disappears. Such excrescences are not out of place among the other miseries

1 Luke 12.7.

of temporal existence, but they are incompatible with the happiness of the saints in the life to come.

Therefore, let those who, on earth, are too thin or too fat take comfort. They would not choose to be that way now if they could avoid it. They will certainly not be that way in eternity. For, what makes a human body beautiful is an harmonious contour combined with a pleasing complexion. Now this harmony is lacking whenever some part or other of the body is ugly in itself or out of proportion with the rest of the body. However, all ugliness arising from lack of harmony will disappear in that state. Here, every deformity is transformed, and every part that is too small is readjusted as God knows how, and every part that is too large has its excess redistributed throughout the whole body. Nor need we worry about beauty of complexion in the kingdom of our Father, where the 'just will shine like the sun.'[2] We may well believe that this brightness was already present in the body of the risen Christ, but that it was hidden from the eyes of His disciples. Weak, human eyes could not have sustained that radiance when they turned to recognize Him. That is one reason why He revealed Himself by allowing the disciples to touch the scars of His wounds, and why (though He had no need of nourishment and took it only when He chose) He ate and drank with them.

When something (in this case, His radiance) is present, yet invisible to persons who can see other things (as the disciples could), the Greeks say that such persons are suffering from *aorasía*—a word used in the Septuagint text of Genesis,[3] and which, for the lack of an exact equivalent, is translated by 'blindness.' Here, the people of Sodom are said to have suffered 'blindness' when they looked for the door of the just man and could not find it. Had they been suffering

2 Matt. 13.43.
3 Gen. 19.11.

from total blindness, they would have asked, not for the door, but for someone to lead them to the door.

Nevertheless, such is our love for the martyrs that, even when we come into His kingdom, we shall want, so we feel, to see with our eyes the wounds which they bore in their bodies for the Name of Christ. And, maybe, we shall. For, in the martyrs, such wounds will not be a deformity; they will have a dignity and loveliness all their own; and, though this radiance will be spiritual and not physical, it will, in some way, beam from their bodies. Of course, this does not mean that the martyrs who suffered from amputation or decapitation will appear in the resurrection without their head or members—for the martyrs, too, were told that not a hair of their head would perish. But if it is becoming, in the world to come, that traces of glorious wounds should be left in immortal flesh, then where the wounds were made by crushing or cutting there the scars will remain, although, of course, the members themselves will be restored. What remains true is that in heaven there will be no defect left in any risen body. Who, however, would think of calling the traces of triumphant virtue a defect?

Chapter 20

It is unthinkable that there should be any limits to the Creator's omnipotence in resuscitating and restoring to life every element of any human body that has been devoured by beasts or consumed by fire, or reduced to dust, or dissolved into liquid, or evaporated into air. Nature may have recesses secret enough to hide such elements from our sense, but she has none that can escape the scrutiny or power of the Creator of the universe. And here I may invoke one of the supreme authorities among the pagans. It was Cicero who gave, as best he could, this definition of God: 'A spirit unlimited and

free, immaterial and immortal, that knows all things and moves all things, and is itself endowed with everlasting motion.'[1] It is a definition based on the best wisdom of the great philosophers. How, then, if I may use the language of the philosophers, can anything be hidden from a 'spirit that knows all things' or escape, ultimately, from one that 'moves all things.'

With this in mind, we may now take up the question—usually thought so difficult—of the flesh of a dead man which has become the living flesh of another. To whose body will it belong in the resurrection? There are cases, as history records, and as the unhappy experiences of our own day prove, of men so famished as to be driven to eating dead men's bodies. And, of course, no one seriously denies that there is here a case of complete digestive assimilation and transformation of one man's flesh into that of another. The fact that the emaciated man fills out is proof enough of where his new flesh came from.

I have already suggested the elements which are needed for the solution of the problem. Whatever flesh the starving man lost by exhalation into the air can be recalled, as I said, by Almighty God. And, similarly, the eaten flesh will be restored by God to the man in whom it first became human flesh. This flesh can be looked upon as a loan taken by the famished man and, like any other borrowed goods, must be returned to the one from whom it was taken. And, of course, the flesh of the famished man will be restored by the One who can recall even fumes from the air. Even though this lost flesh were completely dissipated so that not a single material particle were to be found anywhere in nature, the Omnipotent could restore it from a source of His own choosing. Of course, we cannot suppose that it could be so completely dissipated. The Truth has said: 'Not a hair of your head

1 *Tusculan Disputations* 1.27.

shall perish.' It would be absurd, then, to think that so much flesh lost by starvation could perish, while a single hair cannot.

And now, after weighing all these problems and resolving them as best I could, the following conclusions have been reached: first, in the resurrection of the body into eternal life, the size will be that which was reached, or would have been reached, in each man's mature manhood; second, there will be an appropriate beauty of the body arising from the harmony of all its parts, and it is a fair supposition that this beauty will be achieved by such a redistribution throughout the body of whatever in any one part was out of proportion that, while nothing is lost, the harmony of the whole will be maintained; third, there may be some increase in stature, since beauty will demand a general distribution of what, in any one member, would be an ugly excess; fourth, a good case, however, can be made for the contention that a risen body will be just the same in stature as it was at the time of death, so long as it is admitted that there will be no deformity, no infirmity, no decrepitude, no deficiencies, nor anything else that would be unbecoming in a realm where the sons of the resurrection and the promise are to be like the angels of God in regard to beatitude, though not, of course, in regard to body and age.

Chapter 21

The body, therefore, that is to rise will consist of the remains in the sepulchre, augmented by whatever parts of the body may have been lost during life, and by all that has suffered decay after death. All this will be transformed from its former condition as a natural body into the new condition of a spiritual body, and will be invested with incorruptibility and immortality. And, even though by some accident of life or by the savagery of enemies the whole body has been re-

duced to dust and thrown to the winds or scattered on the waters so that not a trace of it seems to be left, nothing in fact will escape the omnipotence of the Creator, and not a hair of its head will perish. The risen body will be flesh and not spirit, yet it will be a flesh so responsive to the spirit that it will be a spiritual body—much as, during life, a spirit submissive to the flesh was a carnal spirit, though it was spirit and not flesh.

Of this latter we have sad experience in our fallen condition. When, for example, St. Paul wrote: 'I could not speak to you as to spiritual men but only as carnal,'[1] he was speaking not of the bodies of the Corinthians but of their 'carnal spirits.' So, too, when we speak of a 'spiritual man' in this life, we know that he has a body and is fleshly and that he 'sees another law' in his members warring against the 'law of his mind.'[2] Nevertheless, the flesh of the risen body will be a spiritual body, as we know from the same Apostle's words: 'What is sown a natural body rises a spiritual body.'[3]

But, as to the nature of a spiritual body or the greatness of such a grace, how can I dare to speak? To do so would be, I fear, rash indeed, seeing that we as yet have no experience of such a reality. Nevertheless, we feel a joy in our hope that clamors for some words in praise of God, and it was from the depths of just such a holy and ardent love that the Psalmist broke out into the utterance: 'I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of thy house.'[4] At any rate, from the kind of gifts which God gives, even amid the griefs of this present life, and to the good and wicked alike, we may conjecture, with His help, something of the greatness of that grace which, for lack of experience, we cannot properly put into

1 1 Cor. 3.1.
2 Cf. Rom. 7.23.
3 1 Cor. 15.44.
4 Ps. 25.8.

words. Recall merely two of God's graces. Think of the creation of man endowed with integrity, and think of the joyous life granted to the first couple in all the abundance of the Garden of Eden—all too short, though it was, for any of their offspring to taste of it. Even in this present condition in which we still are and which, for all our progress in virtue, seems like one long, uninterrupted trial, the tokens of God's goodness to man baffle all our attempts to describe them!

Chapter 22

This life of ours—if a life so full of such great ills can properly be called a life—bears witness to the fact that, from its very start, the race of mortal men has been a race condemned. Think, first, of that dreadful abyss of ignorance from which all error flows and so engulfs the sons of Adam in a darksome pool that no one can escape without the toll of toils and tears and fears. Then, take our very love for all those things that prove so vain and poisonous and breed so many heartaches, troubles, griefs, and fears; such insane joys in discord, strife, and war; such wrath and plots of enemies, deceivers, sycophants; such fraud and theft and robbery; such perfidy and pride, envy and ambition, homicide and murder, cruelty and savagery, lawlessness and lust; all the shameless passions of the impure—fornication and adultery, incest and unnatural sins, rape and countless other uncleannesses too nasty to be mentioned; the sins against religion—sacrilege and heresy, blasphemy and perjury; the iniquities against our neighbors—calumnies and cheating, lies and false witness, violence to persons and property; the injustices of the courts and the innumerable other miseries and maladies that fill the world, yet escape attention.

It is true that it is wicked men who do such things, but

the source of all such sins is that radical canker in the mind and will that is innate in every son of Adam.[1] For, our infancy proves with what ignorance of the truth man enters upon life, and adolescence makes clear to all the world how full we are of folly and concupiscence. In fact, if anyone were left to live as he pleased and to do what he desired, he would go through practically the whole gamut of lawlessnesses and lust—those which I have just listed and, perhaps, others that I refrained from mentioning.

Yet, for all this blight of ignorance and folly, fallen man has not been left without some ministries of Providence, nor has God, in His anger, shut up His mercies.[2] There are still within the reach of man himself, if only he will pay the price of toil and trouble, the twin resources of law and education. With the one, he can make war on human passion; with the other, he can keep the light of learning lit even in the darkness of our native ignorance.[3] This is the meaning of those many appeals to fear in disciplining the waywardness of growing children. That is why we have tutors and schoolmasters with their ferules and straps and canes, and why, in the training of a child we love, we use the authority of Holy Writ to 'beat his sides . . . lest he grow stubborn'[4]—else he may become too wild ever to be tamed. The point of all such human punishment is to help dispel our ignorance and to bridle our untamed desires—the double birthmark with which we come into this world.

As evidence of this inheritance we have only to recall how difficult it is to remember, how easy to forget; how hard to learn and how easy to be ignorant; how difficult to make an

1 . . . *ab illa tamen erroris et perversi amoris radice venientia, cum qua omnis filius Adam nascitur.*
2 Cf. Ps. 76.10.
3 . . . *in ipsis sensibus generis humani prohibitio et eruditio contra istas, cum quibus nascimur, tenebras vigilant et contra hos impetus obponuntur.*
4 Eccli. 30.12.

effort and how easy to be lazy. We need go no further to realize to what depths our damaged nature tends to gravitate and what aid it needs to be rescued from its inclinations. We are weighed down in soul and body by sloth and indolence, and disinclined to make an effort because, in fact, this price of effort, even for our good, is a part of the penalty we must pay for sin.

Such, then, are the penalties which must be paid even in childhood and merely for the purpose of learning what our elders want—and this is seldom really useful! But who can describe or even imagine all the later ills that befall mankind? When we are not victims of the lawlessness and lust of wicked men, we have to suffer the miseries that no one in our present condition can escape. Who can be free from fear or grief in a world of mourning and bereavement, of losses and legal penalties, of liars and deceivers, of the false imputations, violences and other wickednesses of our neighbors? Think of the tragedies of being robbed or reduced to slavery, of bonds and prison walls, of banishment and torture, of limbs cut off and eyes torn out, of bodies made to minister to an oppressor's lusts, and of all other no less dreadful possibilities.

And think of the dread we have of the countless accidents of nature, of the extremes of heat and cold, of winds and rains and floods, of thunder, lightning and winter storms, of earthquakes, landslides and openings in the earth; of stumbling, shying, biting horses; of poisoned fruits and waters, of pestilential air and animals diseased; of the harmful and often fatal bites of wild animals. Take, for example, the rabies resulting from the bite of a mad dog. Here we have the gentlest and most friendly of all animals making his own master more afraid of a dog than of lions or of dragons, because when a man has been infected by this poison he becomes so raging mad that he frightens his whole family far more than the wildest animals ever could.

Or think of the perils of voyagers at sea and of travelers on land. Even a man taking a walk is liable to the most unsuspected accidents. Here is a man in perfect health returning from downtown to his home; he slips and breaks his leg; the wound festers and he dies. Or take a man sitting down. You would think that no one could be safer, yet Heli, the priest, slipped from a chair and was killed.[5] Or take farmers and all who depend on them. There is the weather to be feared, the soil, the blights that ruin crops. At least, you might think, the fears would vanish when the crops are gathered and are in the barns. Yet I have known cases where a sudden flood has not only driven the men from the fields but has swept the grain from the barns.

Then there are the demons in a thousand forms that fill mankind with dread. Not even innocence is safe from their incursions. No innocence is greater than that of newly baptized children, yet, to give us a lesson in holy diffidence, even they are sometimes attacked by demons. God, who permits this tragedy, could not teach us more emphatically how much the misery of this life is to be moaned and how greatly the blessedness of eternity is to be desired.

Turn, now, to the maladies that afflict our bodies. Not even medical libraries have catalogued all the diseases; in most cases, it takes pain to drive out pain, so that medical care and cures can be as cruel as the complaints themselves.[6] Then there is hunger and thirst. Desperate men have been driven to drink human urine, sometimes their own, and to eat human flesh, and sometimes to kill others in order to eat them—and not always their enemies. There have been mothers driven to desperation by hunger and to the unbelievable monstrosity of devouring their own children.

Even sleep, which we think of as perfect rest, is made

5 1 Kings 4.18.

6 . . . *etiam ipsa adiumenta et medicamenta tormenta sunt.*

restless by dreadful dreams and nightmares so filled with unspeakable phantoms that seem so real that our whole being is filled with fear. And even when we are awake, we are often tortured even more cruelly by delirium induced by some toxic or diseased condition. Worse still are those weird phantasms evoked by malignant demons in the imaginations of perfectly healthy men; even when such men are not seduced by these imaginations to serve the Devil's purposes, the delusions are painfully humiliating.

From this all but hell of unhappiness here on earth, nothing can save us but the grace of Jesus Christ, who is our Saviour, Lord and God. In fact, the very meaning of the name, Jesus, is Saviour, and when we say 'save' we mean, especially, that He saves us from passing from the misery of this mortal life to a still more miserable condition, which is not so much a life as death. It is true that, even in this life on earth, through the intercession of the saints we have many holy comforts and great remedies. Nevertheless, such favors are not always given to those who ask—lest such favors be mistaken for the real purpose of religion, which is felicity in that other life in which all our ills will be no more. What grace is meant to do is to help good people, not to escape their sufferings, but to bear them with a stout heart, with a fortitude that finds its strength in faith.

To gain such fortitude we need, as even the wisdom of this world assures us, that true philosophy which, as Cicero says,[7] is given by the gods to very few and is a gift greater than any which the gods have given men, or even have the power to give. Here, surely, in this insistence on a true as opposed to any kind of philosophy, we have an admission by our main opponent, the pagan world, of the reality of supernatural grace. And what is more, if it is only to a few that there is given from on high this sole source of solace in the

7 *De finibus* 5.21.

miseries of this life, the pagans should conclude that our human race, taken as a whole, has been condemned to pay mortal misery as a penalty for sin. And if, as they confess, there is no greater gift from God than this, then they should admit that it can be given by no less a divinity than the One than whom, as even the polytheists admit, there is no greater.

Chapter 23

The ills of human life which have been mentioned above are common to good men and bad men alike, but there is a special travail that comes upon holy people in the course of the war that must be waged with their own weaknesses. The battle of self-conquest is filled with the perils of temptation. The flesh never ceases to lust against the spirit, nor the spirit against the flesh.[1] Sometimes the opposition is stronger and sometimes weaker, but the result is that we do not do all that we would toward eliminating lust. The most we can do, with the grace God gives us, is to subdue it by withholding our consent. Only by maintaining a sleepless vigilance can we defeat the deceptions of half-truths and specious arguments, dispel the darkness of error, save ourselves from mistaking good for evil and evil for good, overcome the fear of doing what we ought, bridle the desire of doing what is wrong, and see to it that the sun does not go down on our wrath,[2] nor anger provoke us to return evil for evil, nor unreasoning melancholy sap our energies.

God aiding our efforts, we must ward off the inclinations to be slothful in serving our neighbors, to allow pagan calumnies to wear down our Christian conscience, to permit our own rash judgments to mislead us in regard to others, to suffer others' lies to break our spirit. We must work to prevent

1 Cf. Gal. 5.17.
2 Cf. Eph. 4.26.

sin from so reigning in our mortal body that we obey its lusts; we must strive not to yield our members to sins as weapons of iniquity.[3] We must keep our eyes from yielding to concupiscence and conquer our craving for revenge. We must stop our sight and thought from lingering on what is sinful, our ears from listening to idle and immoral words, our will from choosing what is illicit—even though we like it. Above all, in this war so full of toil and trouble we have to strive to suppress the vain hope that our efforts can bring us victory, and also the illusion that, when victory comes, our efforts were the important factor. On the contrary, we owe all victories to God, and we must say with St. Paul: 'Thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'[4] And we must remember those other words: 'In all these things we overcome because of him who has loved us.'[5]

One thing is certain. Whatever effort we bring to this battle with our own frailties, and whatever success we have in overcoming and subjugating our passions, the time can never come, this side of the grave, when there will be no need to plead: 'Forgive us our debts.'[6] On the other hand, when we come to that kingdom where we are to be eternally with our immortal bodies, there will be no wars to wage, no debts to pay. And, in fact, there would have been no such war at all, and no such weaknesses, had our nature continued, as it was created, unfallen. This is why the battling which is so full of dangers, and after which we long for final victory and permanent security, is a warfare that belongs to the miseries of this present life. Thus, once more, this life is proved by so many witnesses to be one that is under condemnation, one that must pay the penalty of miseries and maladies.

3 Cf. Rom. 6.12,13.
4 1 Cor. 15.57.
5 Rom. 8.37.
6 Matt. 6.12.

Chapter 24

From all this misery, in which we admire the justice by which God punishes mankind, we must now turn to consider the multitude and munificence of the blessings which God's goodness bestows on the creatures who are ruled by His providence.

First, think of the blessing of fecundity which was bestowed upon man before he fell. God said: 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'[1] That blessing did not cease because man sinned, for God willed it to remain in the race even after the race was condemned. Not even the canker of sin, which has involved mankind in the blight of death, was able to take from human seed the miracle of life, nor have human bodies lost that still more mysterious power, woven into their very texture, whereby the seed itself is produced. Thus, in the torrential stream of human history, two currents meet and mix: the current of evil which flows from Adam and that of good which comes from God. The original good includes two quite different things: the procreation of the body and the inbreathing of a soul.

As for the elements of evil, namely, sin which resulted from man's audacity and the penalty imposed by God's judgment, I have already said all that the theme of this work requires. My present purpose is to speak, rather, of the endowments of human nature which, by God's bounty, have been bestowed and continue to be bestowed upon us, even though we have been wounded by sin and condemned to pay its penalties. For, the penalties imposed do not mean the total deprivation of all that God has given. For, had that been the case, there would have been no human nature left at all. Nor did God renounce the governance of our nature even though He permitted us, in punishment, to fall under the tyranny of the

1 Gen. 1.28.

Devil. The truth is that the Devil himself is still under God's power, since it is God (the Supreme Being that brings into being whatever in any way exists) who permits that the nature of the Devil should even subsist.

Thus it was from a fountain, so to speak, of divine goodness that there flowed into a nature, fallen by reason of sin and condemned to punishment, the two blessings I have mentioned. The first of these, the power of procreation, was granted by God in a blessing He pronounced during those seven days of creative work, on the last of which He rested. The second of the blessings, the inbreathing of the soul, is a part of that work whereby God 'works even until now.'[2] For, if God withdrew, even from inanimate things, His creative power, they could not continue to be what they became by creation, let alone complete that series of movements which were meant to measure the span of their existence. As for man, when God created him, He gave him, in addition to being and movement, the power of propagating other men, who, in turn, were born with this same power. (It was, however, a power which no individual was obliged to exercise. Actually, in certain cases, God Himself withdrew this gift of potency and fertility. However, to mankind in general, God continued the blessing of fecundity which He pronounced on Adam and Eve.)

Of course, it does not follow that this power of propagation, which was left intact even after sin, is identical with what it would have been had man not sinned. For, man who was once 'in honor' sinned, and after that 'he is compared to senseless beasts'[3] and has become like them in the matter of procreation, even though that light of reason which makes man an image of God has not been extinguished altogether. It was only because God added to the animal power of pro-

2 John 5.17.
3 Ps. 48.13.

creation this conformation to God's image that man's offspring retain the form and essence of our specifically human nature. For, of course, God could have chosen to fill the earth with human beings without the exercise of the mating process, since He could have created all men out of nothing, just as He created the first. And, even as things now are, unless God's creative power concurred, no mating of man and maid would result in generation.

There is a parallel between natural generation and supernatural regeneration. Speaking of the way in which a man is fashioned into supernatural life,[4] St. Paul says: 'Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the growth.'[5] So, too, in regard to natural generation, it may be said: Neither the wife nor the husband's part is anything, but it is God who fashions the form of the offspring; nor is the mother who bears and brings the child to birth anything, but it is God who gives the growth. For, it is by that creative process by which God 'works even until now'[6] that human seed unfolds its multiple potentialities, evolving from the invisible latencies of the womb into the visible beauty of forms that we behold. And, by a marvelous mating, He brings a spiritual nature into union with one that is material and makes the soul and body active and passive principles, respectively, of a single human whole. This operation of God, so marvelous and mysterious, He performs not only in the case of man, who is a rational animal and the highest and noblest of all animals on earth, but also in the case of the tiniest insects. And no one can reflect on this marvel without a sense of astonishment and some expression of admiration for the Creator.

4 . . . *de institutione spiritali, qua homo ad pietatem iustitiamque formatur.*
5 1 Cor. 3.7.
6 John 5.17.

In regard to the principle of human life, God infused into it a capacity for reasoning and intellection. In infancy, this mental capacity seems, as it were, asleep and practically nonexistent, but in the course of years it awakens into a life that involves learning and education the perception of the true and the pursuit of the good. This capacity flowers into that wisdom and virtue which enable the soul to battle with the arms of prudence, fortitude, temperance, and justice against error, waywardness, and other inborn weaknesses, and to conquer them with a purpose that is no other than that of reaching the supreme and immutable Good. Even when this Good is not attained, there still remains, rooted in all rational nature, a divinely given capacity for goods so high that this marvel of God's omnipotence is beyond any tongue to express or any mind to comprehend.

And, quite apart from those supernatural arts of living in virtue and of reaching immortal beatitude which nothing but the grace of God which is in Christ can communicate to the sons of promise and heirs of the kingdom, there have been discovered and perfected, by the natural genius of man, innumerable arts and skills which minister not only to the necessities of life but also to human enjoyment. And even in those arts where the purposes may seem superfluous, perilous and pernicious, there is exercised an acuteness of intelligence of so high an order that it reveals how richly endowed our human nature is. For, it has the power of inventing, learning and applying all such arts.

Just think of the progress and perfection which human skill has reached in the astonishing achievements of cloth making, architecture, agriculture and navigation. Or think of the originality and range of what has been done by experts in ceramics, by sculptors and by painters; of the dramas and theatrical spectacles so stupendous that those who have not seen them simply refuse to believe the accounts of those who

have. Think even of the contrivances and traps which have been devised for the capturing, killing, or training of wild animals; or, again, of the number of drugs and appliances that medical science has discovered in its zeal for the preservation and restoration of men's health; or, again, of the poisons, weapons, and equipment used in wars, devised by military art for defense against enemy attack; or even of the endless variety of condiments and sauces which culinary art has discovered to minister to the pleasures of the palate.

It was human ingenuity, too, that devised the multitude of signs we use to express and communicate our thoughts—and, especially, speech and writing. The arts of rhetoric and poetry have brought delight to men's spirits by their ornaments of style and varieties of verse; musicians have solaced human ears by their instruments and songs; both theoretical and applied mathematics have made great progress; astronomy has been most ingenious in tracing the movements, and in distinguishing the magnitudes, of the stars. In general, the completeness of scientific knowledge is beyond all words and becomes all the more astonishing when one pursues any single aspect of this immense corpus of information. Last, but not least, is the brilliance of talent displayed by both pagan philosophers and Christian heretics in the defense of error and falsehood. (In saying this, of course, I am thinking only of the nature of the human mind as a glory of this mortal life, not of faith and the way of truth that leads to eternal life.)

Now, the Creator of this noble human nature is the true and supreme God whose providence rules all that He has created, whose power is unlimited, and whose justice is infinite; and, therefore, man could never have fallen into the miseries that he now suffers and is destined to suffer in eternity—excepting only the elect—unless the first man, the father of all the rest, had committed an enormous iniquity.

Turn now from man's mind to his body. It is true that it

is no better than the body of a beast as far as dying is concerned and, in life, it is even weaker than that of many of the animals. Nevertheless, the human body is a revelation of the goodness of God and of the providence of the body's Creator. It is a body obviously meant to minister to a rational soul, as you can see from the arrangement of the human organs of sense and of man's other members. This is obvious, too, in man's specific appearance, form, and stature. The bodies of irrational animals are bent toward the ground, whereas man was made to walk erect with his eyes on heaven, as though to remind him to keep his thoughts on things above. And if we need further evidence to show to what kind of a mind the body was meant to minister, we have only to think of the marvelous mobility of the tongue and hands, so perfectly suited for speaking and writing, for the arts, and for the countless other activities of men.

What is more, quite apart from these practical purposes, there is in a man's body such a rhythm, poise, symmetry, and beauty that it is hard to decide whether it was the uses or the beauty of the body that the Creator had most in mind. It is clear that every organ whose function we know adds to the body's beauty, and this beauty would be still more obvious if only we knew the precise proportions by which the parts were fashioned and interrelated. I do not mean merely the surface parts which, no doubt, could be accurately measured by anyone with proper skill. I mean the parts hidden below our skin, the intricate complex of veins and nerves, the inmost elements of the human viscera and vital parts, whose rhythmic relationships have not yet been revealed. Surgeons, of course, have done something in their relatively crude anatomical study of corpses (and in the course of their hardly less inhuman operations on living bodies) to explore the last recesses of the organs they have had to handle in order to learn the best technique in dealing

with this or that disorder. But what I have in mind is the rhythm of relationships, the *harmonía,* as the Greeks would say, whereby the whole body, inside and out, can be looked upon as a kind of organ with a music all its own. The beauty of this music no one has yet discovered, because no one has dared look for it. Nevertheless, if this total organic design could only be discerned, even in the seemingly ugly elements of the human viscera, there would be revealed to the soul so ravishing a beauty that no visible shapeliness of form that delights the eye—the mere minister of our mind—could be compared with it.

Of course, some parts of the human body appear to have no other purpose than to add to beauty, as the mamillae on a man's chest or the beard on his face. Certainly, if the beard were meant for protection rather than for beauty, it would have served a better purpose for the weaker sex, whose face remains uncovered. If, then, we argue from the facts, first, that, as everyone admits, not a single visible organ of the body serving a definite function is lacking in beauty, and, second, that there are some parts which have beauty and no apparent function, it follows, I think, that in the creation of the human body God put form before function. After all, function will pass and the time will come when we shall delight solely in the unlibidinous contemplation of one another's beauty, knowing that our joy will be giving glory to the Creator, of whom the Psalmist says: 'Thou hast put on praise and beauty.'[7]

And now, to pass from man to the rest of creation, what beauty for contemplation and what bounties for use God has scattered like largesse for man amid the weariness and miseries of his fallen and penalized lot! What words can describe the myriad beauties of land and sea and sky? Just think of the illimitable abundance and the marvelous loveliness of light,

7 Ps. 103.1.

or of the beauty of the sun and moon and stars, of shadowy glades in the woods and of the colors and perfume of flowers, of the songs and plumage of so many varieties of birds, of the innumerable animals of every species that amaze us most when they are smallest in size. For example, the activity of ants and bees seems more stupendous than the sheer immensity of whales. Or take a look at the grandiose spectacle of the open sea, clothing and reclothing itself in dresses of changing shades of green and purple and blue. And what a delight when the ocean breaks into storm and can be enjoyed—at least from the shore where there is no fear of the fury of the waves!

Or think of God's bounty in the never-ending stores of foods that banish hunger; in the variety of flavors which a generous nature provides without calling on the skill of cooks to stimulate our sluggish appetite; in the medicinal value of so many foods, whether we are sick or healthy. We have to thank God, too, for the alternations of day and night, for the solace of soothing breezes, and for the plants and animals that provide the linen and wool for the making of our clothing. No one person could catalogue all of God's bounties. Each of the blessings which I have, as it were, piled up in a heap, contains a multitude of lesser blessings wrapped up within it, and if I were to unfold each of these packages and deal with the blessings in detail I should never end.

And, remember, all these favors taken together are but the fragmentary solace allowed us in a life condemned to misery. What, then, must be the consolations of the blessed, seeing that men on earth enjoy so much of so many and of such marvelous blessings? What good will God not give to those predestined to eternal life, if He gives so much to those who are doomed to death? What joys in the life of beatitude will God not shower on those for whom, in that life of misery, He allowed His only-begotten Son to suffer so many sorrows,

even unto death? It was this that St. Paul had in mind when he wrote: 'He who has not spared even His own Son but delivered him for us all, how can He fail to grant us also all things with Him.'[8] Just imagine how perfectly at peace and how strong will be the human spirit when there will be no passion to play the tyrant or the conqueror, no temptation even to test the spirit's strength. And think of the mind's universal knowledge in that condition where we shall drink, in all felicity and ease, of God's own wisdom at the very source. Think how great, how beautiful, how certain, how unerring, how easily acquired this knowledge then will be. And what a body, too, we shall have, a body utterly subject to our spirit and one so kept alive by spirit that there will be no need of any other food. For, it will be a spiritual body, no longer merely animal, one composed, indeed, of flesh but free from every corruption of the flesh.

Chapter 25

It is true that, in regard to the rewards which the soul is to enjoy in the blessedness which is to follow the present life, the best of the pagan philosophers agree with us. What they object to, however, in our faith is the resurrection of the body; on this point, they are emphatic in their denial. However, the fact is that the majority of men have moved away from the small minority of skeptics and have turned to Christ who, by His own Resurrection, realized in fact what seems absurd in theory. This majority of men, whose hearts are now filled with faith, includes the learned and unlearned alike, philosophers along with simple folk. And it is to be noted that God had revealed in prophecy not only the faith which the world has believed but also the fact that the

8 Rom. 8.32.

world would believe as it now believes; certainly, it was not by means of any sorceries of Peter[1] that God was compelled to reveal what, to the joy of all believers, He had predicted so long before the event. For, this is the God before whom, as I have said and rejoice to repeat, Porphyry admits, on the basis of pagan oracles, that all lesser divinities tremble.[2] This is the God whom Porphyry himself hails as the Supreme God, the Father and King.

As for the meaning of the divine predictions, certainly no one should rely on the interpretations of those who have remained skeptical while the rest of the world has believed what God predicted it would believe. It is surely far better to believe like the world, whose believing was predicted, than as a handful of gabblers believe who have refused to follow the world in believing what it was predicted the world would believe. The pagans justify their position by saying that it would dishonor the God they esteem so highly if they believed that the Scriptures set forth predictions which have not been fulfilled. But, surely, it is just as grave an injury to God—if not graver—to offer an interpretation which runs counter to the faith of the whole world that believes as God predicted it would believe, and praised it for believing, and prepared it to believe.

Let us ask the pagans this question: Should we withhold faith in the resurrection and eternal life of the body, on the ground that such a thing is impossible to God; or should we refuse to believe on the ground that such a thing is wicked and unworthy of God? Impossible? Need I say more than I have in regard to that Omnipotence which has demonstrably accomplished so many things that seem unbelievable? If the pagans are really in search of something impossible even to Omnipotence, I shall give them a hint: Not even God can

1 Cf. above, 18.53.54.
2 Cf. above, 19.22,23.

tell a lie. But, by simply refusing to believe that God has told a lie, we are driven to believe that He has done what He had the power to do. Just let the pagans refuse to believe that God can lie and they will come to believe that He will accomplish what He has promised to accomplish; and so they will come to believe as the rest of the world believes—the world whose believing God predicted, praised, promised, and has now demonstrably brought to pass. The resurrection, therefore, is possible.

Wicked? How can the pagans prove that the resurrection of the body involves some kind of evil? It involves no corruption. Therefore, it involves no evil for the body. I have already discussed the hierarchy of the elements;[3] and I have said all that needs to be said of other hypothetical difficulties.[4] In Book XIII, I have, I think, sufficiently proved the agility of the glorified body from the relative agility enjoyed during good health even in this present life,[5] for this agility is, of course, incomparably less than that enjoyed in immortal life. Anyone who has not read these earlier parts of the present work (or who wishes to recall them to memory) can read them for himself.

Chapter 26

Another argument of the pagans is taken from the Porphyrian position that a soul in bliss must be completely divested of any body. For, if no soul can be happy unless completely emancipated from the flesh, then what I have said of the incorruptibility of the body is of no avail. Now, in the Book just mentioned,[1] I have done all that was called for

3 Cf. above, 22.11.
4 Cf. above, 22.12-20.
5 Cf. above, 13.18.

1 Cf. above, 13.16.

to dispose of this objection. One point, however, I shall here recall. I appeal to Plato, the master of them all, to correct what others have written. What he says is that those of their gods who dwell in the heavenly bodies will die and, in that sense, abandon their bodies before they can be fully happy, but that the God who made them promised them an assured immortality in an abiding abode in the heavenly bodies. In Plato's view, this was not a consequence of the nature of these gods, but simply a result of God's will.

A second argument which Plato demolishes is that which says that the resurrection of the body is incredible because it is impossible, for, in saying that the uncreated God promised immortality to the gods He had made, Plato declares, as plainly as can be, that God promised to do something impossible. This is how Plato makes God speak to the lesser gods: 'Since you have had a beginning, you cannot be immortal and indestructible; yet by no means shall you ever suffer dissolution, nor shall any degree of death destroy you, nor prevail over my determination which is a stronger pledge of your perpetuity than those bodies with which you are joined.'[2] Anyone listening to words as clear as these would have to be as deaf as he is daft[3] to doubt that, in Plato's mind, the God who made the gods promised them something that is impossible. He says in effect: 'You cannot be immortal, but, by my will, you are going to be immortal.' This is the same as saying: 'What cannot be done to you, by my doing, will be done.' Now, the God who, in the Platonic theory, promised to do what is impossible is the God who, in fact, will raise up a body that is incorruptible, immortal, and spiritual.

Why, then, all this clamor about impossibility, since it is God who has promised the impossible, and since the whole

2 Cf. *Timaeus*, p. 41A. Here, as in 13.16, St. Augustine uses Cicero's translation in *De universo*.

3 *Si non solum absurdi, sed surdi non sunt.*

world has believed the impossible, because God promised it, and since this God also promised that the world would believe the impossible, and since what we proclaim is that this God who, even in Plato's view, does things which are impossible, is the God who, in fact, is to do the impossible. The conclusion is, not that flight from the body, but rather that union with an incorruptible body, is the condition of the soul's beatitude.

Nothing, surely, could be more fitting than that a soul that has suffered in a corruptible body should rejoice in a body that is incorruptible. For, in such bodies there will be none of that 'dire desire' to return to mortal bodies of which Virgil speaks in a line of Platonic inspiration.[4] In our view, there will be no desire of returning to bodies for the simple reason that the souls will be in union with the bodies they long to have, and in a union that will never be dissolved with bodies which the souls cannot lose even for a single moment by any kind of death.

Chapter 27

There are declarations in Plato and Porphyry which, if they could have been integrated, might have made Christians of both of them. Plato held that, without bodies, souls could not subsist eternally. That is why he thought that even the souls of philosophers some time or other would finally return to their bodies. On the other hand, Porphyry proclaimed that no soul, in a state of perfect purgation after its return to the Father, could ever return to the miseries of temporal existence.[1] Hence, if Plato could only have shared the truth which he saw with Porphyry, then the purified souls of the

4 *Aeneid* 6.751: *Rursus et incipiant in corpora velle reverti.*

1 Cf. above, 10.30.

holy and the wise would have been reunited to their human bodies; and, again, if the truth which Porphyry realized could have been shared with Plato, then holy souls would never return to the miseries of a corruptible body. So that, if each had rejected his particular error and if both had admitted the truths which each saw, I think they would both have agreed to conclude that souls would not merely return to bodies, but would be united to such bodies as would make possible a life of eternal beatitude. In Plato's view, even holy souls are to return to human bodies, and in Porphyry's opinion, holy souls are not to return to the miseries of this world. Let, then, Porphyry say with Plato: 'They will return to bodies'; and let Plato say with Porphyry: 'They will not return to misery.' Both will then agree that souls will return to bodies in which no unhappiness can be left. Such bodies can only be those which God has in mind when He promises to make souls in union with their immortal bodies blessed forever. I believe that both Plato and Porphyry could easily have been persuaded to agree with us Christians. Once they agreed that the souls of the saints are to return to immortal bodies, they would allow them to return to their own bodies, in which they endured the evils of this life and in which they had worshiped God in piety and faith, precisely with the purpose of escaping these evils.

Chapter 28

There are not a few Christians so moved by Plato's superb style and by the elements of truth in his system as to declare that his conception of the resurrection of the dead is a good deal like our own. Cicero, however, who touches on Plato's views in the *De re publica,*[1] takes the view that Plato was

1 6.4.

merely playing with his fancy, rather than attempting to state the facts, when he tells the story of a man who came back to life and described the other world as corresponding to the Platonic theory. Labeo, too, has a tale of two men who died on the same day and whose souls met at a crossroads. When these two souls were bidden to return to their bodies, they agreed to live as friends and, in fact, remained friends until they died.

But, of course, the kind of return to life which these writers relate is like that which we have known to happen miraculously—a return to this present life, but not a resurrection to immortal life. Marcus Varro, on the other hand, has a passage in his *Origins of the Roman People* so remarkable that I think it should be cited just as it stands. He writes: 'There are astrologers who have declared that certain men are destined to a rebirth or, as the Greeks call it, a *palingenesia*. This process of reincarnation, they say, takes 440 years, but, when it is accomplished, the same body and soul that were formerly in union return and reunite in the same person once more.' It does not much matter whether this was Varro's own conception or that of the astrologers whom he leaves unnamed. Nor, of course, is the idea fully true, since, once souls are reunited to their body, they will never leave them. But the point is that here is a pagan refutation of the pagan arguments against the resurrection, which are based on the gratuitous assumption of its impossibility. To those, at least, who follow or have followed Varro's views, it does not seem impossible that bodies which have disintegrated into dust, ashes, or liquids, or have been devoured by beasts or eaten by human beings, should return to their pristine condition.

All, then, that is needed for a complete synthesis is that Plato and Porphyry (or, rather, their present followers) should agree with us Christians on four points: first, that even holy souls are to be united with bodies (as Plato admits);

second, that they are never to return to any state of misery (as Porphyry insists); third, that they are to be given such bodies as are compatible with a life of eternal beatitude unmarred by any misery (as the Christian faith proclaims); and, finally, that the return is to be to the same bodies in which they were before (which is Varro's contribution). Such a synthesis would solve, for the pagans, the whole problem of the resurrection of the body into eternal life.

Chapter 29

And now, with such help as the Lord will grant us, let us try to see what is to be the activity of the saints in those spiritual and immortal bodies in which their flesh is to be alive, not merely with a carnal but with a spiritual life. I speak of activity, although, perhaps, I should rather say calm or repose. To tell the truth, I have no real notion of what eternal life will be like, for the simple reason that I know of no sensible experience to which it can be related. Nor can I say that I have any mental conception of such an activity, for, at that height, what is intelligence or what can it do? In heaven, as St. Paul assures us, 'the peace of God . . . surpasses all understanding.'[1] Certainly, it surpasses ours. Maybe it surpasses that of the angels as well. Of course, it does not surpass God's 'understanding.' This much is sure. If the redeemed are to live in the peace of God, they are to live in a peace 'which surpasses all understanding.' As to ours, there is no doubt at all, and, when St. Paul says 'all understanding' he seems to imply no exception for the angels. We ought, therefore, to take the text to mean that neither men nor angels can understand, as God does, that peace of God by

1 Phil. 4.7.

which God Himself is at peace. Thus, 'all understanding' means all except God's.

Nevertheless, since we are to be sharers of His peace, in the measure of our capacity, we are to receive, within ourselves and in our relations to one another and to God, a supreme degree of peace—whatever that supreme degree for us may be. So, too, in the measure of their capacity, do the holy angels understand that peace. Men on earth, whatever the perfection of understanding they may reach, understand far less than the angels. For we must remember that not even St. Paul, for all his greatness, could say more than this: 'We know in part and we prophesy in part; until that which is perfect has come. . . . We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face.'[2]

Face to face—this is how the holy angels, who are called *our* angels, already see. They are our angels in the sense that, once we have been delivered from the power of darkness, have received the pledge of the spirit, and have been translated to the kingdom of Christ, we shall have begun to belong to the angels, with whom we are to be fellow citizens in that holy and supremely satisfying Communion which is that City of God about which I have been writing all these pages. The angels, who are God's angels, are our angels in the way that the Christ of God is our Christ. They are God's, because they never deserted God. They are ours,.because they have begun to accept us as their fellow citizens.

Now, the Lord Jesus said: 'See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, their angels in heaven always behold the face of my Father in heaven.'[3] In the way, then, that they see, we, also, shall one day see. But we do not see in that way yet. That is why St. Paul said what I have

2 1 Cor. 13.9,12.
3 Matt. 18.10.

just quoted: 'We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face.' This implies that there is in store for us a reward for our faith, that Vision which St. John had in mind when he said. 'When he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him just as he is.'[4] For, of course, 'face' is to be understood not as the kind of face we now have as part of our body, but as a manifestation of what God is.

And so it is that, when anyone asks me what the activity of the saints in their spiritual bodies will be, I do not tell him what I now see; I tell him what I believe. I follow the rule suggested by the psalm: 'I have believed, therefore have I spoken.'[5] What I answer is: The saints will see God with their bodily senses, but whether they will see Him by their sense in the same way we now see the sun and moon and stars, the land and sea and all that they contain—that is a difficult problem.[6] It is difficult to admit that bodies in heaven will be such that the saints cannot open and close their eyes at will; on the other hand, it is still harder to admit that, if one closes his eyes in heaven, he will cease to see God. After all, the prophet Eliseus, when he was nowhere near his wicked servant, Giezi, secretly (as he thought) saw him receiving the gifts which Naaman the Syrian gave him, after Eliseus had healed Naaman of his leprosy.[7] Why, then, should not the saints, in their spiritual bodies, be much more able to see all things, not merely with their eyes closed, but even when they are far away from what they see.

This is the kind of perfection of sight which St. Paul refers to in the words: 'For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect has come, that which

4 1 John 3.2.
5 Ps. 115.10.
6 Cf. St. Augustine's *Retractationes* 67.
7 4 Kings 5.26.

is imperfect will be done away with.'[8] The Apostle goes on to indicate, as best he can, by a comparison, the gap between the future life and the present life even of men of outstanding holiness: 'When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child. Now that I have become a man, I have put away the things of a child. We see now through a mirror in an obscure manner, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know even as I have been known.'[9]

Although, therefore, even in this life, Eliseus could see his servant, who was nowhere near, receiving gifts, such a vision even in the case of man who could work miracles was, in comparison with the Vision in the other life, what a child is to a mature man. Can we not argue, therefore, that, 'when that which is perfect has come,' and when there will be no burden of a corruptible body weighing down the soul but, rather, an incorruptible body that will prove to be no impediment, the saints will have no more need of their bodily eyes, when they want to see, than Eliseus had need of his eyes to see what his servant was doing, even though the servant was a long way off. Notice the words of the Prophet to Giezi. In the Septuagint version, they run: 'Did not my heart go with you when the man turned from his chariot to meet thee and thou didst take his money?' And, in the translation made directly from the Hebrew text by the priest, Jerome, the words are: 'Was not my heart present, when the man turned back from his chariot to meet thee?'[10] Thus, it was with his 'heart' that the Prophet says he saw; and, of course, no one can doubt that he was miraculously helped in this by God.

Now just think, when God will be 'all in all,'[11] how much

8 1 Cor. 13.9,10.
9 1 Cor. 13.11,12.
10 4 Kings 5.26.
11 1 Cor. 15.28.

greater will be this gift of vision in the hearts of all! The eyes of the body will still retain their function and will be found where they now are, and the spirit, through its spiritual body, will make use of the eyes. After all, even Eliseus used his eyes to see things near him, even though he had no need of them to see a man who was not present. And he could have seen things present by his spirit, even with his eyes closed, just as well as he saw things that were not present when he was a long way off. Hence, we should not dream of saying that the saints in heaven will be unable to see God with their eyes closed, since they will see Him at all times with their spirit.

The question still remains whether they will see God with their eyes open and by means of these bodily eyes. For, of course, if spiritual eyes in a spiritual body can see in a no better way than that in which our present eyes can see, then it will certainly be impossible for even spiritual eyes to behold God. If that immaterial Nature, which is circumscribed by no place but is everywhere wholly present, is to be visible to the eyes of a spiritual body, then these eyes will most certainly have to have a power altogether unlike the power of any eyes on earth. It is true that we say that God is in heaven and on earth, and He Himself, through a Prophet, says: 'I fill heaven and earth.'[12] But this does not mean that, in heaven, we shall say that God has one part there and another part on earth. For, He is wholly in heaven and He is wholly on earth; and He is in both simultaneously, not merely successively—which is utterly impossible in the case of any material substance.

When we speak of eyes in heaven having a more powerful vision, we do not mean the kind of sharper sight which snakes and eagles are said to have. For, however keen such animal vision may be, it is limited to material objects. What is meant

12 Jer. 23.24.

is that in heaven eyes can see realities that are immaterial. It is the kind of vision that may have been given to holy Job even while he was in his mortal body, when he said to God: 'With the hearing of the ear, I have heard thee, but now my eye seeth thee. Therefore, I reprehend myself, and do penance in dust and ashes.'[13] I say, 'may have been,' because there is no reason why we should not take the 'eye' in this text to mean 'the eye of the heart of the mind,' in the sense that St. Paul meant in his expression, 'the eyes of your mind being enlightened.'[14] It was the Divine Master who said: 'Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.'[15] Hence, no Christian reading these words in a spirit of faith has any doubt that, when God is to be seen, it will be by the eyes of the heart. But, of course, the problem I am now dealing with is whether, in heaven, God will also be seen by the eyes of the body.

Take the text: 'And all mankind shall see the salvation of God.'[16] There is no difficulty at all in taking this to mean: 'And all mankind shall see the Christ of God.' After all, Christ was seen in the body and will be seen in the body when He is to come to judge the living and the dead. Scripture has many texts showing that He is the 'salvation of God,' particularly in the words of the venerable old man, Simeon, who took the Child in his arms and said: 'Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; because my eyes have seen thy Salvation.'[17] And then there is the declaration of holy Job, as his words appear in the translation direct from the Hebrew: 'And in my flesh I shall see my God.'[18] This is an undoubted prophecy of the

13 Job 42.5,6.
14 Eph. 1.18.
15 Matt. 5.8.
16 Luke 3.6.
17 Luke 2.29,30.
18 Job 19.26.

resurrection of the flesh. Had Job said: 'by means of my flesh,' we might have taken him to be referring to Christ, rather than to 'God,' since Christ in the flesh will be seen by the senses. But as the words stand, they can be taken to mean: 'I shall be in my flesh when I shall see God.'

At the same time, not even St. Paul's expression, 'face to face,'[19] compels us to believe that we shall see God by means of our physical face, in which we have material eyes, since we shall have an uninterrupted vision of God in our spirit. For, unless there were some spiritual face of the interior man, St. Paul would not have written the words: 'But we all, with face unveiled, reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into his very image, from glory to glory, as through the Spirit of the Lord.'[20] So, too, in the psalm, I take the words, 'Come ye to him and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be confounded,'[21] to refer to this inner face. The truth is that we shall draw near to God by faith, which is a power to see which is not in our body, but in our mind. However, since no one knows what ways of approaching God the spiritual body will have, for the simple reason that no one has any experience of a spiritual body, we have to remember, in the absence of any completely unambiguous text to rescue us from all doubt, that we are in the condition described in the Book of Wisdom: 'The thoughts of mortal men are fearful, and our counsels uncertain.'[22]

As far as the reasoning of philosophy reaches, intelligible realities are so correlated to the vision of the mind, as sensible or material things are to the senses of the body, that the intelligibles cannot be perceived by the senses nor material things by the immediate intuition of the soul. Now, if phil-

19 1 Cor. 13.12.
20 2 Cor. 3.18.
21 Ps. 33.6.
22 Wisd. 9.14.

osophy were our most certain source of knowledge, we could be sure that not even a spiritual body could have eyes capable of seeing God. But, of course, such logic becomes laughable in the light of reality and of divine Revelation.[23] Only a traitor to the truth[24] would dare to argue that God has no knowledge of material things, on the ground that God has no body and, hence, no bodily eyes to see such things. Moreover, the revelation concerning Eliseus which I mentioned above is a clear indication that material objects can be perceived by the spirit, independently of the body. Certainly, what Giezi did in taking material gifts was a material action, yet the Prophet saw these material movements, not by the senses of his body, but by the eyes of his spirit. And, if it is a fact that bodies can be perceived by the soul, there is no reason why some special faculty of a spiritual body should be unable to see a spiritual reality by means of the senses; and, of course, God is such a spiritual reality.

Moreover, each of us has a perception of his own life, that is, of the principle by which we are alive in our bodies and which gives our members their growth and movement; and this perception is by means of an interior sense, not by means of our eyes. It is different with our perception of other people's lives. These are invisible and we see them only by seeing their bodies. In fact, the reason why we distinguish living from non-living bodies is that we see bodies along with their lives, even though we cannot see the living bodies as such, except through the bodies. However, where there is a life, by itself and apart from a body, this we do not see with the eyes of our body.

What, therefore, is possible and highly probable is that we shall be able to see the material bodies of the new heaven and the new earth in such a way that, by means of our own bodies

23 *Sed istam ratiocinationem et vera ratio et prophetica inridet auctoritas.*
24 . . . *aversus a vero.*

and of all the others which we shall see wherever our eyes are turned, we shall see God, and we shall see Him with the utmost clarity as being everywhere present and as regulating the whole universe, including material things. We shall see Him in a way different from the way in which His 'invisible attributes' are now seen, 'being understood by the things that are made,'[25] for 'we see now through a mirror in an obscure manner' and only 'in part,'[26] and we must rely more on the eyes of faith, whereby we believe, than on the eyes of the body, whereby we see the beauty of the material universe.

Recall again the living men among whom we now live, at the moment when they are performing vital actions. As soon as we turn our eyes on them, we not merely believe that they are living, we see that they are living. Even though we have no power to see the 'living' apart from the 'living bodies,' nevertheless, we see with the eyes of our bodies, and in no kind of 'obscure manner,' the 'life' in the living bodies. In some such way, in heaven, wherever we shall turn the eyes of our spiritual bodies, we shall see the immaterial God, ruling all things, and we shall see Him by means of our bodies.

Thus, we have two hypotheses. Either God will be seen by these eyes of ours, because they will possess, among other high endowments, something resembling the powers of a mind to enable them to perceive what is by nature immaterial—an hypothesis for which there is no support in experience or in Revelation and which is difficult, if not impossible, to establish; or else—what is easier to comprehend—God will be made known to and be perceived by us, in many ways. He will be seen in the spirit (whereby each of us will see Him within ourselves and in one another); He will be seen in

25 Rom. 1.20.
26 1 Cor. 13.12.

Himself; He will be seen in the new heaven and the new earth and in every creature then existing; and, by means of our bodies, He will be seen in every material object toward which the eyes of our spiritual bodies happen to direct their gaze. Even our very thoughts will then be made known to one another.[27] For, then will be fulfilled what St. Paul said: 'Pass no judgment before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the things hidden in darkness and make manifest the counsels of hearts; and then everyone will have his praise from God.'[28]

Chapter 30

Who can measure the happiness of heaven, where no evil at all can touch us, no good will be out of reach; where life is to be one long laud extolling God, who will be all in all; where there will be no weariness to call for rest, no need to call for toil, no place for any energy but praise. Of this I am assured whenever I read or hear the sacred song: 'Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord: they shall praise thee forever and ever.'[1] Every fiber and organ of our imperishable body will play its part in the praising of God. On earth these varied organs have each a special function, but, in heaven, function will be swallowed up in felicity, in the perfect certainty of an untroubled everlastingness of joy. Even those muted notes in the diapason of the human organ, which I mentioned earlier, will swell into a great hymn of praise to the supreme Artist who has fashioned us, within and without, in every fiber, and who, by this and every other element

27 Cf. *Retractationes* 25,48.
28 1 Cor. 4.5.

1 Ps. 83.5.

of a magnificent and marvelous Order, will ravish our minds with spiritual beauty.[2]

These movements of our bodies will be of such unimaginable beauty that I dare not say more than this: There will be such poise, such grace, such beauty as become a place where nothing unbecoming can be found. Wherever the spirit wills, there, in a flash, will the body be. Nor will the spirit ever will anything unbecoming either to itself or to the body.

In heaven, all glory will be true glory, since no one could ever err in praising too little or too much. True honor will never be denied where due, never be given where undeserved, and, since none but the worthy are permitted there, no one will unworthily ambition glory. Perfect peace will reign, since nothing in ourselves or in any others could disturb this peace. The promised reward of virtue will be the best and the greatest of all possible prizes—the very Giver of virtue Himself, for that is what the Prophet meant: 'I will be your God and you shall be my people.'[3] God will be the source of every satisfaction, more than any heart can rightly crave, more than life and health, food and wealth, glory and honor, peace and every good—so that God, as St. Paul said, 'may be all in all.'[4] He will be the consummation of all our desiring —the object of our unending vision, of our unlessening love, of our unwearying praise. And in this gift of vision, this response of love, this paean of praise, all alike will share, as all will share in everlasting life.

But, now, who can imagine, let alone describe, the ranks upon ranks of rewarded saints, to be graded, undoubtedly, according to their variously merited honor and glory. Yet,

2 *Omnes quippe ille . . . qui nunc latent harmoniae corporalis numeri non latebunt . . . rationales mentes in tanti artificis laudem rationabilis pulchritudinis delectatione succendent.*
3 Lev. 26.12.
4 1 Cor. 15.28.

there will be no envy of the lower for the higher, as there is no envy of angel for archangel—for this is one of the great blessednesses of this blessed City. The less rewarded will be linked in perfect peace with the more highly favored, but lower could not more long for higher than a finger, in the ordered integration of a body, could want to be an eye. The less endowed will have the high endowment of longing for nothing loftier than their lower gifts.

The souls in bliss will still possess the freedom of will, though sin will have no power to tempt them. They will be more free than ever—so free, in fact, from all delight in sinning as to find, in not sinning, an unfailing source of joy. By the freedom which was given to the first man, who was constituted in rectitude, he could choose either to sin or not to sin; in eternity, freedom is that more potent freedom which makes all sin impossible. Such freedom, of course, is a gift of God, beyond the power of nature to achieve. For, it is one thing to be God, another to be a sharer in the divine nature. God, by His nature, cannot sin, but a mere sharer in His nature must receive from God such immunity from sin. It was proper that, in the process of divine endowment, the first step should be a freedom not to sin, and the last a freedom even from the power to sin. The first gift made merit possible; the second is a part of man's reward. Our nature, when it was free to sin, did sin. It took a greater grace to lead us to that larger liberty which frees us from the very power to sin. Just as the immortality that Adam lost by his sin was, at first, a mere possibility of avoiding death, but, in heaven, becomes the impossibility of death, so free will was, at first, a mere possibility of avoiding sin, but, in heaven, becomes an utter inability to sin.[5]

5 . . . *prima immortalitas fuit . . . posse non mori, novissima erit non posse mori: ita primum liberum arbitrium posse non peccare, novissimum non posse peccare.*

Our will will be as ineradicably rooted in rectitude and love as in beatitude. It is true that, with Adam's sin, we lost our right to grace and glory, but, with our right, we did not lose our longing to be happy. And, as for freedom, can we think that God Himself, who certainly cannot sin, is therefore without freedom? The conclusion is that, in the everlasting City, there will remain in each and all of us an inalienable freedom of the will, emancipating us from every evil and filling us with every good, rejoicing in the inexhaustible beatitude of everlasting happiness, unclouded by the memory of any sin or of sanction suffered, yet with no forgetfulness of our redemption nor any loss of gratitude for our Redeemer.

The memory of our previous miseries will be a matter of purely mental contemplation, with no renewal of any feelings connected with these experiences—much as learned doctors know by science many of those bodily maladies which, by suffering, they have no sensible experience. All ills, in fact, can be forgotten in the double way in which we learn them, namely, notionally and experientially. It is one thing to be a philosopher, learning by ethical analysis the nature of each and every vice, and another to be a scoundrel, learning his lessons from a dissolute life. So, too, the student who becomes a doctor forgets in a way different from that of a patient who has suffered disease. The one forgets by giving up his practice; the patient, by being freed from pains. Now, it is into this second kind of oblivion that the previous miseries of the saints will fall, for not a trace of any sensible experience of suffering will remain.

However, in virtue of the vigor of their minds, they will have not merely a notional remembrance of their own past but also a knowledge of the unending torments of the damned. For, if they had no kind of memory of past miseries, how could the Psalmist have said: 'The mercies of the

Lord they will sing forever'?[6] And, surely, in all that City, nothing will be lovelier than this song in praise of the grace of Christ by whose Blood all there were saved.

Heaven, too, will be the fulfillment of that Sabbath rest foretold in the command: 'Be still and see that I am God.'[7] This, indeed, will be that ultimate Sabbath that has no evening and which the Lord foreshadowed in the account of His creation: 'And God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done. And he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.'[8] And we ourselves will be a 'seventh day' when we shall be filled with His blessing and remade by His sanctification. In the stillness of that rest we shall see that He is the God whose divinity we ambitioned for ourselves when we listened to the seducer's words, 'You shall be as Gods,'[9] and so fell away from Him, the true God who would have given us a divinity by participation that could never be gained by desertion. For, where did the doing without God end but in the undoing of man through the anger of God?

Only when we are remade by God and perfected by a greater grace shall we have the eternal stillness of that rest in which we shall see that He is God. Then only shall we be filled with Him when He will be all in all. For, although our good works are, in reality, His, they will be put to our account as payment for this Sabbath peace, so long as we do not claim them as our own; but, if we do, they will be reckoned as servile and out of place on the Sabbath, as the text reminds us: 'The seventh day . . . is the rest of the Lord. . . . Thou shalt not do any work therein.'[10] In this

6 Cf. Ps. 88.2.
7 Ps. 45.11.
8 Gen. 2.2,3.
9 Gen. 3.5.
10 Deut. 5.14.

connection, too, God has reminded us, through the Prophet Ezechiel: 'I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them.'[11] It is this truth that we shall realize perfectly when we shall be perfectly at rest and shall perfectly see that it is He who is God.

There is a clear indication of this final Sabbath if we take the seven ages of world history as being 'days' and calculate in accordance with the data furnished by the Scriptures. The first age or day is that from Adam to the flood; the second, from the flood to Abraham. (These two 'days' were not identical in length of time, but in each there were ten generations.) Then follow the three ages, each consisting of fourteen generations, as recorded in the Gospel of St. Matthew: the first, from Abraham to David; the second, from David to the transmigration to Babylon; the third, from then to Christ's nativity in the flesh. Thus, we have five ages. The sixth is the one in which we now are. It is an age not to be measured by any precise number of generations, since we are told: 'It is not for you to know the times or dates which the Father has fixed by his own authority.'[12] After this 'day,' God will rest on the 'seventh day,' in the sense that God will make us, who are to be this seventh day, rest in Him.

There is no need here to speak in detail of each of these seven 'days.' Suffice it so say that this 'seventh day' will be our Sabbath and that it will end in no evening, but only in the Lord's day—that eighth and eternal day which dawned when Christ's resurrection heralded an eternal rest both for the spirit and for the body. On that day we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise—for this is to be the end

11 Ezech. 20.12.
12 Acts 1.7.

without the end of all our living, that Kingdom without end, the real goal of our present life.

I am done. With God's help, I have kept my promise. This, I think, is all that I promised to do when I began this huge work. From all who think that I have said either too little or too much, I beg pardon; and those who are satisfied I ask, not to thank me, but to join me in rejoicing and in thanking God. Amen.

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